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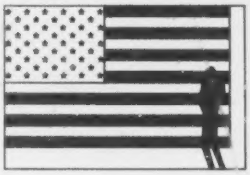
THE FIGGIE REPORT ON FEAR OF CRIME:

AMERICA AFRAID



PART I:
THE GENERAL PUBLIC

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Preface

PREFACE

by

The Honorable John O. Marsh, Jr.
Former U.S. Congressman from Virginia
Former Counselor to President Ford with Cabinet Rank
Member of the Board of Directors of A-T-O Inc.

The statistics of crime are well-known. What has not been adequately explored in the past is how our outlook on life and our behavior patterns have been changed by the fear which accompanies the statistics. We believe this report provides some revealing insights into those changes, and that it may well become a landmark in appraising the quality of life in America today.

Although the study was sponsored by a corporation, it was not conceived as a means of serving a special commercial interest. The corporate sponsor, A-T-O Inc., is a multi-divisional company with products ranging from American LaFrance fire apparatus to Rawlings Sporting Goods. A comparatively small part of its business happens to be in the security field. However, the sophistication of protective measures required for both private and public purposes has become a matter of personal concern to the top management of the company.

Harry E. Figgie, Jr., chief executive officer of A-T-O Inc. is a man of vision, humanity, and a deep sense of history. I have known him to be a businessman of rare talent, and one who has a great personal commitment to preserve the values which he believes have made this country great. He is as much a teacher as a manager and has been responsible for a number of remarkable education programs carried out by the company as a public service.

It was Harry Figgie who decided that A-T-O Inc. should sponsor a study of a tragic development in our society which threatens to bring about major changes in our way of life. As one who believes that sound education is the best preparation for intelligent action, he felt this study would be a stimulus for new initiatives to solve this basic problem.

That is the origin and purpose of The Figgie Report on Fear of Crime: America Afraid. It is Harry Figgie's hope that telling the truth about how crime has affected our lives may awaken the public to the urgent need to do something about it.

The Figgie Report on Fear of Crime has, in fact, resulted in three separate documents, each of which, we believe, can stand on its own as a major contribution to an understanding of the problem. The three parts are being issued separately over a period of several months. They are:

Part I:	A study of how the fear of crime has affected the lifestyles of the American public, based on a national survey.
Part II:	A study of how the fear of crime has affected corporate life, based on a survey of chief executive officers of Fortune 1000 companies.

Preface

Part III:	A ten-city profile of the fear of crime, based on interviews of mayors, judges, police chiefs, editors, television commentators and other community leaders in Atlanta, Cleveland, Los Angeles, Louisville, Milwaukee, New York City, Phoenix, St. Louis, Seattle and Washington, D.C.

It is not the purpose of these reports to offer remedies. What to do about the problem is for the American public and policy makers to decide. It is our fervent hope that the Figgie Report will be a valuable resource to those seeking a solution, and convincing evidence that fear of crime has reached such proportions that it deserves to be given a high priority on the national agenda.

Introduction

Introduction

Fear of crime is slowly paralyzing American society. Yet of all the problems confronting the nation at this time, this fear is perhaps the least appreciated and the most dimly understood.

The impact of fear of crime on American life, on family and social relationships, on business, on culture and recreation, is profound. Who among us has not been concerned about traveling to a deserted part of town at night? Or about the all too real possibility that the security of our home would be breached? Who among us has not been concerned when loved ones -- especially our children -- do not return home when expected?

As well as being one of the principal causes of many of today's most pressing problems, fear of crime may also be one of the key factors impeding society's ability to cope successfully with those problems. This fear has played a prominent role in bringing about the deterioration of American cities, the steady rise in criminal violence, the flight of the middle class to the suburbs, the failure of once-thriving small neighborhood businesses. Why is America, traditionally a nation of activists, of doers, unable to reverse these debilitating trends, this downward slide in the quality of American life that alarms and disheartens so many citizens and drains the vitality from so many local communities?

Fifty years ago the country was caught in the iron grip of economic depression. Hunger, debt, economic failure and, later, the threat of world war were the sources of the nation's fear in those difficult times. However, by developing a sense of common purpose and common challenge, the nation came through one of the great trials of its history. Today, America is in the ever-tightening grip of a new kind of fear, fear of criminal victimization, of physical harm and property loss. Americans have today become afraid of one another. Confronted with this frightening new challenge, American optimism appears dampened, American ability to act rendered ineffective, American communities split apart. Fear of violent crime seems to have made the country helpless, incapable of dealing with the sources of its fear.

Perhaps the main reason for this evident incapacity to respond successfully to the threat is that the problem is relatively new to American society. Recent studies in criminology report that the sharply rising crime rates throughout the country, as well as the fear which accompanies, indeed, which exceeds them, is a phenomenon first detected in the 1930's, which subsided briefly after World War II, and which then accelerated with gathering momentum up to the present time. Throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, according to social scientists, the rate of violent criminal acts in America seems to have decreased consistently and dramatically, only beginning its precipitous rise after the last world war.

American society was created in revolution and has experienced its share of conflict, lawlessness and violence. But because of the vast size of the continent, and the countless dangers involved in its taming and development, Americans were forced to rely on one another in order to survive. Members of a fledgling community had to be mutually interdependent if the community were to grow and flourish. In such a fragile, developing social context, widespread criminal activity would have been intolerable. Therefore, as communities established themselves across the land and grew to maturity, the sense of necessary social cohesion afforded crime and fear of crime little opportunity to take root.

During World War I and later, during the 1930's and '40's, the universally-felt need for community, for social cohesiveness in response to the threats facing the country, may in part account for the relatively low and stable rates of reported crime. With the end of World War II, however, earlier challenges were removed, allowing a society to turn to other pursuits. The incidence of violent personal and property crimes began its precipitous climb at that time. Figures show an increase of 370% in the rate of reported murders between 1946 and 1973, with the sharpest rise occurring after 1965. Trends in serious thefts are similar: the post-1955 increase in the United States has been about 300%, with the most notable rise coming, again, after 1965. By 1978, the FBI Uniform Crime Report counted an average of one violent personal crime every 30 seconds and one property crime every 3 seconds.

Although the facts about crime in America today are shocking, society seems to have adapted to this new reality almost without being aware of how such an accommodation affects the nation's well-being. Crime and the fear of crime have, like a dark dye, permeated the fabric of American life. Yet the change has occurred so gradually, so insidiously, that society has accepted it. The spread of terrorism, and the nation's response to it, is a case in point. Because of the ever-present threat of hijacking, air travelers must pass through a metal detector and allow their bags to be checked and x-rayed for weapons and explosives each time they board a plane. No one, however, protests loudly against being considered a potential criminal. It is a reality that has become accepted as a part of the ordinary routine of travelling. The same complacency in the face of the spread of crime and its accompaniment -- fear -- is evident in most other areas of ordinary experience.

Crime, then, has spread, taking on a new, more menacing face, but people have adapted themselves to it because they see no other effective response.

Over the past twenty-five years, reports of criminal violence have received increasing attention in the media. Filmed and televised dramas in which crime is a theme have more and more become a staple of the nation's entertainment. And the general pervasiveness of crime extends beyond vicarious experience into the realm of the actual. Most citizens are aware that the potential of falling victim to a criminal act is real, can happen almost anywhere, at almost any time.

Fifty years ago, the apprehension by police of a dangerous, violent criminal was the cause of widespread celebration and relief. But who today knows which criminal is Public Enemy Number One, and who is there today who does not realize that for every apprehended dangerous criminal, ten others are waiting to take his place? Even when a dangerous criminal is tried, sentenced, and put in prison it is expected that he will be back on the streets again after a few years, or even months.

Crime and the possibility of victimization are everywhere today, challenging the individual's sense of security and the neighborhood's sense of community. Because there seems to be no practical way of addressing the problem, fear of crime is in the process of breaking communities apart, forcing individuals into self-protective isolation, thereby undermining the very roots of American optimism, of good will towards one's neighbors, of the ability of a common effort to accomplish society's most treasured goals, and to maintain the fundamental values of the democratic community. Increased mobility of contemporary society has introduced a new element of discontinuity and social dislocation which has weakened American's urban neighborhoods, suburbs and small towns. Americans less and less often know their neighbors or care to maintain relationships with them. And in such a situation crime and fear of crime has been able to hold and spread throughout the land.

It is not the intention of the report that follows to suggest remedies for this crucial and complex problem. The aim, rather, is to illuminate the facts about fear of crime as it undermines and degrades the quality of American life, and to explore the effects and ramifications of that fear. It is hoped that by being made public, this study of the effects of fear of crime in America can bring about a new, practical understanding of a social issue that has for too long been obscured. A clear awareness of this problem is the first step towards bringing society together to meet the challenge and to find the most effective solution.

Methodological Note

Methodological Note

Previous Studies

In order to design a series of studies that explore new terrain, Research & Forecasts, Inc. reviewed previous surveys regarding fear of crime. Most such studies examine the causes of fear of crime, suggesting that gender (female), city size (large),[1] neighborhood cohesion, and race (black), are major factors predicting fear of crime, along with age, income, and education. (See Ennis, 1966; Biderman, 1967; Clemente and Kleiman, 1977; and Hindelang, Gottfredson and Garofalo, 1978).

Such studies about causes are sophisticated and useful, but they pay relatively little attention to the consequences of fear of crime on everyday lives or to coping behavior of most citizens. Skogan (1978) initiated studies on some efforts to adopt defensive tactics or reduce exposure risk, but used few items to define coping behavior. A clear need existed for an in-depth study exploring the wide range of ways people act when confronted with fear of crime, aquiring new attitudes, and taking special precautions.

Our study focuses on the consequences of fear of crime more comprehensively than previous studies do, illuminating the array of influences affecting fear and the consequences of fear in everyday life. This study reveals four distinct sets of items to be associated with fear. The four predictive clusters are: victimization, social disadvantage, isolation, and access to information. The items included in these clusters demonstrate "face validity," as explanatory variables in analyzing who fears crime. This grouping of items helps identify types and levels of fear and their relation to the consequences of fear. Consequences of fear are studied by examining a wide range of possible precautions, including: restricting community activities; taking special precautions when traveling, going away for a weekend, or staying at home; gun ownership. The impact of fear and of crime awareness on confidence in the police and attitudes toward the crimininal justice system (courts and prisons) were also explored.

---

[1] The Research & Forecasts, Inc. questionnaire asks respondents to report their own subjective estimates of their place of residence: large city, small city, suburb, or rural area.

Sample

The sample used in this study was a random digit dial sample of all telephones, listed and unlisted, in the continental United States.

The method used to construct such samples involves the use of a massive data base which is updated frequently. A specialized computer program generates a list of telephone numbers organized in such a manner that each telephone has an equal probability of being called.

Systematic data collection techniques guarantee that the randomness of the telephone number selection process is maintained. Ninety-three percent of Americans have access to a telephone in their dwellings.[2] Telephone sampling is an efficient manner in which to reach a wide array of groups in the population within a short time span. The advantage of a compressed time frame is that it minimizes external bias, diminishing the impact of unforeseen events.

The final sample size of 1,047 is large enough to ensure that conclusions drawn from data analysis will be valid within a small margin of error for the entire adult United States population of 155 million.

Weighting

The initial sample did not correspond exactly to recent Census Bureau estimates of the demographic characteristics of the population over age 18.[3] In order to make the two populations correspond more closely, we weighted our sampled population concerning two variables: gender and income.

The Census Bureau estimates the 1979 population over 18 as being 41.9% male and 58.1% female. In order to correct the sample findings to approximate census figures, males in the sample were increased by a factor of 1.136 and females were decreased by a factor of .902. The income groups were similarly weighted.[4]

[2] See W. R. Klecka and Alfred J. Tuckfarber, "Random Digit Dialing: A Comparison To Personal Surveys," Public Opinion Quarterly (1978, p. 104)

[3] U.S. Bureau of the Census - Statistical Abstract of the United States, 1979, p. 29

[4] U.S. Bureau of the Census, Op. Cit., p. 449

Gamma Coefficient

Whenever this study provides tables illustrating correlations between factors, the tables include a decimal number called "gamma." "Gamma" is a number or factor that indicates the closeness of the relationship between two variables. It can take any value between -1.0 and +1.0. A gamma of at least .20 indicates a noteworthy relationship. All gamma correlations in this report are significant at the 5 percent level or better. That is, the correlations may occur by chance no more than 5 out of 100 times.

Impact

Whenever this study discusses the "impact" of one factor or another, it should be understoood that the direction of the impact in question is hypothetical. The gammas that are used to indicate the strength of an impact simply indicate that a relationship exists.

Sample Size

The sample size varies from question to question throughout the report. On each table, the sample size is indicated in parenthesis. The "percent of total sample" given on the tables is the percent of the adult citizens who responded to the question.

(Further explanations of the Methodology used in this study are found in Appendix II to this report).

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Overview

Overview

The Two Dimensions of Fear

Crime is on the increase in the United States[1] - but as distressing as the rapid rise is, this study discovers that the incidence of crime is far outstripped by the fear of crime. The dramatic discrepancy between the incidence of crime and the fear of crime warrants serious attention - and it is this discrepancy and the reasons for it that form the substance of The Figgie Report On Fear Of Crime: America Afraid.

The study reveals that four out of ten Americans are highly fearful they will become victims of violent crimes, such as murder, rape, robbery, or assault. It also reveals that four out of ten Americans feel unsafe in their everyday environments - their homes, their neighborhoods, their business districts and shopping centers - due to the fear of crime.

The report investigates "two dimensions of fear:" the "concrete fear" of specific acts of violence committed against us and the "formless fear" of non-specific threats to our safety in our communities.

Concrete Fear vs. Formless Fear

To determine whether "concrete fear" and "formless fear" are indeed two distinct types of fear, affecting people in different ways for different reasons, two indices were devised.

The Concrete Fear Index measures how often a person worries about being the victim of six major crimes: murder, sexual assault, mugging, knifing, beating, or armed robbery.

---

[1] FBI Uniform Crime Reports, 1978

The Formless Fear Index measures how often people worry about being alone during the day and at night in their homes, in their neighborhoods and in their central business district or shopping center. The chart below clarifies the difference between the two types of fear.

	Concrete Fear	Formless Fear
Type of threat	Specific acts of violence	Diffuse, vague feeling of being unsafe
Focus of threat	Directed at the individual	Group related, in context of the home (family), neighbors, and the community at large
Level of personal threat	High	Not as high
Location	Anywhere	Near home, in the everyday environment

Different Groups Have Different Fears

The study discloses that fear of crime in America is alarmingly pervasive, crossing all demographic boundaries. The old and the young, the affluent and the poor, men and women, those in cities and those in rural areas - all have a common and debilitating fear of crime. Yet, there are certain groups which show particularly high degrees of fear. What is more, different groups experience different types of fear: some are plagued by high levels of concrete fear, while others exhibit extraordinarily high levels of formless fear.

Overview

Our analysis shows that the groups most afflicted by both concrete fear of specific violent crimes and formless fear of vague dangers in their everyday environments are:

- People living in large cities
- Women
- Blacks

Those especially affected by concrete fear are:

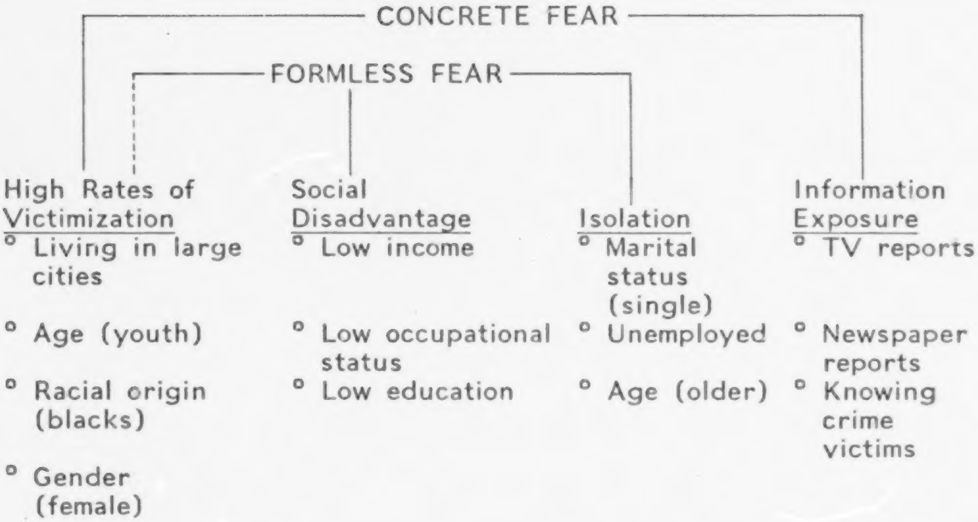
- The young
- Those with higher levels of formal education

Those particularly affected by formless fear are:

- Those with low incomes
- Those with low levels of education
- Those with low occupational status
- Those not working full time
- Those who have experienced a marital loss (divorce, separation or widowhood)
- The old

Why Different Groups Have Different Fears

The study finds that there are four explanatory clusters which help illuminate why particular groups show especially high levels of concrete fear, formless fear or both. The chart below shows the explanatory clusters and their links to the two types of fear:


CONCRETE FEAR
FORMLESS FEAR
High Rates of Victimization
° Living in large cities
° Age (youth)
° Racial origin (blacks)
° Gender (female)
Social Disadvantage
° Low income
° Low occupational status
° Low education
Isolation
° Marital status (single)
° Unemployed
° Age (older)
Information Exposure
° TV reports
° Newspaper reports
° Knowing crime victims

The study reveals that, generally, concrete fear is experienced to a higher degree by those who are among groups that are highly victimized and who have greater exposure to crime-related information. Formless fear, on the other hand, is experienced to a higher degree by those who are somewhat isolated from the mainstream of social activities or who are socially disadvantaged; formless fear is also somewhat related to victimization (hence the dotted line as in the above diagram).

Overview

Coping with Fear

The survey examines what people do about the fear of crime and finds that Americans are extremely cautious and security-minded. The data show, for example, that when pursuing activities outside the home, seven out of ten people keep their car doors locked to keep out intruders, and six out of ten people dress plainly to avoid drawing attention to themselves. To protect their homes, the sweeping majority (nearly nine out of ten) always lock their doors and always identify people before letting them in.

While anti-crime precautions are clearly a part of American life, there are certain groups which take more precautions than others. Among them:

- Women
- Blacks
- People living in large cities
- Those with low incomes
- Those not working full time
- People living in the South

The data show that fear is a strong motivating factor in the taking of precautions outside the home and that people with high amounts of either concrete or formless fear are more likely to take protective measures than are those with low levels of either fear. Precautions taken inside the home do not appear to be motivated so directly by fear; rather, they appear to be taken as part of routine existence, and may be related to a "presumed level" of fear in our society. High rate of victimization is the most powerful of the factors explaining why some people take more precautions than do others.

One very common means of coping with fear is owning a gun. The survey reveals that slightly over half of all Americans own guns. People most likely to own guns include:

- Those living outside of large cities
- Those living in the South
- Males
- Married people
- The young
- Blacks

One explanation of this pattern of gun ownership is cultural and historical. The survey shows that males living outside urban areas are more likely to have guns, and this appears consistent with the cultural role expectation that the males in our society act as "protectors." This is especially true for males in rural areas who are traditionally portrayed as defenders of the family. The study also indicates that gun ownership is concentrated in the South and is least common in the East, which suggest that factors bearing on gun ownership relate to patterns of historical and regional development.

Views on the Police and Criminal Justice System

Given the high levels of fear of crime which pervade American life, it is not surprising that public attitudes toward the criminal justice system are predominately cynical and attitudes toward treatment of criminals themselves are highly punitive. By contrast, however, attitudes toward the police are for the most part positive.

Nearly nine out of ten Americans say their local police are respectful and neither use too much force nor enjoy "just pushing people around." About three-fourths of Americans say the local police treat people of all races the same, and that they do not spend most of their time "going after people who do little things wrong while ignoring most of the bad things going on." Almost two out of three Americans favor giving the police more power to question people. Our analysis does demonstrate, however, there are particular groups that have lower levels of confidence in the police than others. Among them are:

- Those who have been victims of crime
- Younger adults
- Blacks
- Those who know crime victims
- Those who perceive their neighborhood as deteriorating

Americans as a whole manifest a surprisingly high level of support for increased local taxes to provide police protection. Slightly more than half of all Americans favor such a local tax hike, which is striking given the current wave of sentiment for reduced taxes.

Americans' largely favorable views of the police are not echoed in their attitudes toward the judicial system. Eight out of ten

Americans feel that the criminal justice system is not effective in rehabilitating criminals or in helping them return to society as law-abiding citizens. In addition, more than half feel that present prison sentencing does not serve as a deterrent to crime.

The public favors imposition of severe measures in dealing with criminals. Only 3% of respondents feel that the courts in their area are too harsh. Conversely, two out of three Americans favor the death penalty for convicted murderers, and an equal number feel that it would act as an effective deterrent to the crime of murder. Roughly nine out of ten people agree that mandatory prison sentences should be imposed on criminals convicted of violent crime, and that criminals so convicted should be given long prison sentences. One out of two members of the public support the sterilization of habitual criminals and the insane.

The report which follows presents an in-depth analysis of the fear of crime in America, examines how Americans are coping with this fear, and explores current public attitudes toward the police and criminal justice system.

Chapter One
Concrete Fear: The Fear of Specific Violent Acts

Concrete Fear

Incidence Versus Fear of Violent Crime

An alarming four out of ten Americans are highly fearful they will become victims of violent crimes -- murder, rape, robbery, or assault.[1]

This survey reveals that 55% of women fear being raped, 24% of the population fear being beaten up, 23% worry they will be robbed, and 17% fear they will be murdered.

Recent FBI statistics reveal that there is a violent crime committed in America every 30 seconds.[2] These statistics also document a steady increase in the incidence of violent crime across the nation. What these statistics do not reflect is the constant, mounting fear that this rising tide of violence has instilled in us.

Statistics on the incidence of violent crime can appear to be mollifying, when they are stated, as by the FBI, in annual terms: the incidence of murder is only about .009% of the population; robbery about .19%; assault, about .26%; and rape, about .06% (of women).[3].

Americans refuse to be placated by such statistics. As distressing as the growth of violent crime is, the present study has discovered that the incidence of crime is far outstripped by the fear of crime.

The dramatic discrepancy between the incidence of crime and the fear of crime merits serious attention. This report explores the reasons for this vast difference.

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[1] See table in section: Concrete Fear: A Barometer

[2] FBI Uniform Crime Reports, 1978, p. 5

[3] FBI, op. cit., pp. 7, 14, 16, 20

Frequency of Worrying About Being Murdered, Raped, Robbed or Beaten Up Versus Actual National Incidence

1978 FBI Reports	The Figgie Report	
Incidence of Murder	**Fear of Being Murdered**	
		%
.009% of Population	Frequently or Sometimes	17
	Rarely or Never	83
	(Number of Respondents)	(1046)
Incidence of Rape	**Fear of Being Raped or Sexually Assaulted (Women Only)**	
		%
.06% of All Women	Frequently or Sometimes	55
	Rarely or Never	45
	(Number of Respondents)	(540)
Incidence of Robbery	**Fear of Being Robbed**	
		%
.19% of Population	Frequently or Sometimes	23
	Rarely or Never	77
	(Number of Respondents)	(1046)
Incidence of Assault	**Fear of Being Beaten Up**	
		%
.26% of Population	Frequently or Sometimes	24
	Rarely or Never	76
	(Number of Respondents)	(1046)

Concrete Fear: A Barometer

For the purposes of this report, we have identified two types of fear of crime.

Concrete Fear, the focus of this chapter, is the fear of becoming the victim of a *specific* violent crime. By contrast, Formless Fear, which will be discussed in the next chapter, is a *non-specific* fear about safety in one's home, neighborhood and larger community.

Concrete Fear

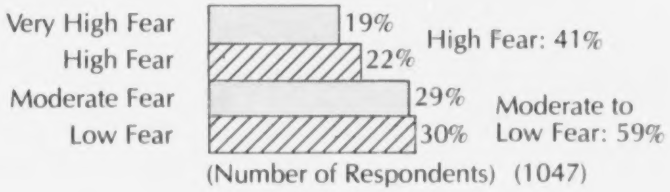
In order to establish an overall barometer of concrete fear, concerns about six major crimes (see chart below) were combined into a single index. The Index of Concrete Fear shows that four out of ten Americans exhibit high to very high levels of fear, while the remainder express moderate to low fear.

Concrete Fear

This index measures worry about:

- Being murdered
- Being sexually assaulted or raped
- Being mugged
- Being knifed
- Being beaten up
- Being held up by an armed robber

Concrete Fear Index



Comparing various demographic groups -- e.g., the urban and the rural, men and women, the old and the young -- dramatic differences emerge, providing a portrait of those among us who harbor the greatest fears of victimization.

Who Are the Fearful?

It is apparent from the data that several groups are experiencing the most intense fear of victimization.

People in large cities show far higher levels of fear than those who live elsewhere. An unsettling 52% of people in large cities have a high or very high degree of concrete fear, contrasted with 31% of individuals living in rural areas. Inhabitants of small cities and suburbs fall between these polarities of expressed fear (41% and 39% respectively). While it is not surprising to see such a contrast between fear in the city and fear "on the farm," it is startling that the level of fear in rural areas is so high. Rural areas have been viewed historically as pastoral havens from the anxieties of city life. Nearly one out of three people in those areas now say they are subject to fear of violent crime.

The young reveal an astonishingly high level of concern. Half of the respondents (49%) aged 18 to 29 reflect a high fear of specific violent crimes, while those aged 30 to 39 exhibit a similar degree of high fear (46%). These groups present a surprising contrast with the older respondents in the sample. Of respondents 40 to 49, 34% expressed high levels of fear, while 33% of all those over 60 displayed high fear.

Women are significantly more frightened of being victims of violent crimes than are men. Forty-six percent (46%) of women express high levels of fear, as compared with a smaller share (34%) of the men.

Concrete Fear

Those who have received more formal education feel somewhat more afraid of possible crimes against them than do the less educated. Forty-six percent (46%) of college graduates show high to very high levels of fear, in contrast with 35% of those with some high school or less. High school graduates fall between these groups, with 41% voicing high fear.

Blacks are somewhat more fearful of personal victimization than whites. Forty-eight percent (48%) express high levels of fear, while 40% of white respondents show an equal degree of fear.

Levels of fear appear fairly consistent among respondents living in different regions of the United States, although those living in the Midwest (43%) and the South (43%) reveal slightly higher levels of concrete fear than those living in the East (36%) and the West (39%).

Impact of Place of Residence on Concrete Fear

Concrete Fear	Place of Residence			
	Rural	Suburb	Small City	Large City
	%	%	%	%
High Fear	31	39	41	52
Moderate to Low Fear	69	61	59	48
(Number of Respondents)	(200)	(233)	(370)	(218)
% of Total Sample	20	23	36	21
Gamma .14				

Impact of Age on Concrete Fear

Concrete Fear	Age				
	18-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60 and Over
	%	%	%	%	%
High Fear	49	46	34	40	33
Moderate to Low Fear	51	54	66	60	67
(Number of Respondents)	(283)	(191)	(160)	(158)	(236)
% of Total Sample	27	18	18	15	22

Gamma .17

Impact of Gender on Concrete Fear

Concrete Fear	Gender	
	Male	Female
	%	%
High Fear	34	46
Moderate to Low Fear	66	54
(Number of Respondents)	(492)	(544)
% of Total Sample	48	52

Gamma .19

Impact of Education on Concrete Fear

Concrete Fear	Education		
	Some High School or Less	High School Graduate or Some College	College Graduate
	%	%	%
High Fear	35	41	46
Moderate to Low Fear	65	59	54
(Number of Respondents)	(355)	(367)	(310)
% of Total Sample	34	36	30

Gamma .07

Concrete Fear

Impact of Race on Concrete Fear

Concrete Fear	Race	
	White	Black
	%	%
High Fear	40	48
Moderate to Low Fear	60	52
(Number of Respondents)	(860)	(169)
% of Total Sample	84	16
Gamma .52		

Impact of Region on Concrete Fear

Concrete Fear	Region			
	East	West	Mid-West	South
	%	%	%	%
High Fear	36	39	43	43
Moderate to Low Fear	64	61	57	57
(Number of Respondents)	(241)	(209)	(259)	(324)
% of Total Sample	23	20	25	31
Gamma .07				

Why Some People Are Highly Fearful

In our analysis we identified four factors as possible explanations for fear of crime. Some are related closely to concrete fear, others are related to formless fear. These factors are: belonging to a segment of the population experiencing high rates of victimization, information exposure, social disadvantage and isolation. As the following chart shows, each factor is composed of several elements:

Four clusters of factors may explain why people are fearful. They are:

Actual Rate of Victimization	Information Exposure	Social Disadvantage	Isolation
° Living in large cities	° TV reports	° Low income	° Marital status (Widowed, separated or divorced)
° Gender (Female)			
° Age (Youth)	° Newspaper reports	° Low occupational status	° Unemployed or retired
° Racial Origin (Blacks)	° Knowing crime victims	° Low education	° Age (Old)

The following section shows how, in our analysis, belonging to a group experiencing high rates of victimization and exposure to information are intimately related to concrete fear. It also shows why social disadvantage and isolation are not related to the specific fear of victimization.

Concrete Fear

- Belonging to a Group Experiencing High Rates of Victimization

Fear of specific crimes is, as we have seen, much higher than the actual incidence of violent crimes. Yet, our data indicate that particularly fearful groups often have some kernel of statistical justification for their fears.

Statistics do indeed show, for example, that there is a good deal more violent crime in the cities than in rural areas. The 1978 FBI report shows a .58% incidence of violent crimes in metropolitan areas, in contrast to an incidence of .17% in rural areas.[4]

The greater fear of victimization among the young is related to murder statistics: individuals aged 20 to 29 comprise a shocking 33% of all murder victims,[5] whereas those in this age group comprise only 17% of the population.[6] This may be because the young are more likely to be exposed to risks than other age groups since they are more mobile than older citizens, and less tied to the security provided by family, careers and neighborhood involvement (see Chapter Two).

[4] FBI Uniform Crime Reports, 1978 p. 36

[5] FBI op. cit., p. 9

[6] Those in the 30-39 age group constitute the next largest group of victims (21% of all victims). Ages 40 - 49 constitute about 13% of all victims; 50 - 59 about 9%; and those 60 and over about 9%. FBI, op. cit., p. 9.

Murder statistics also help explain the greater fear of victimization among blacks: while blacks compose only about 12% of the country's population, a striking 44% of all murder victims are black.[7]

The higher level of fear among women reflected by the Concrete Fear Index is in part related to the extreme amounts of fear women express regarding the crime of rape. As stated, 55% of women fear rape. Statistics once again provide insight into the reasons for fear of rape: there were about 19,000 murders in 1978; in the same year, there were 67,000 rapes.[8]

Thus, as inflated as the fears of these various groups may be, they nonetheless have some statistical foundation.

- Exposure to Information

The study's findings demonstrate a strong correlation between exposure to information, or a high crime awareness, and high fear of personal victimization.

Amount of Information The data indicate that people who see or read reports of violent crime every day are more likely to show high levels of fear than those who see or read such reports less frequently: 46% who say they read daily of violent crime in newspapers express high levels of fear, compared with only 33% of those who read about crime less often.

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[7] FBI op. cit., p. 9
[8] FBI op. cit., p. 15

Similarly, 43% who see such reports on TV daily exhibit high fear, compared with 35% of those who see news reports of violent crime less often.

There is additional support for this conclusion in the finding that those with more formal schooling demonstrate a higher level of concrete fear than others. This is likely to be a partial result of greater exposure to information - not only in the context of schooling, but also in daily life, since this group is more likely to read newspapers and books and to be well-informed generally.

Impact of Exposure to Crime Stories in the Media on Concrete Fear

Concrete Fear	**Frequency of Reading About Crime in Newspapers**	
	Daily %	Less than Daily %
High Fear	46	33
Moderate to Low Fear	54	67
(Number of Respondents)	(629)	(417)
% of Total Sample	60	40
Gamma .23		

Impact of Exposure to Crime Stories in the Media on Concrete Fear

Concrete Fear	Frequency of Seeing Reports of Crime on TV	
	Daily	Less than Daily
	%	%
High Fear	43	35
Moderate to Low Fear	57	65
(Number of Respondents)	(746)	(292)
% of Total Sample	72	28
Gamma .13		

Impact of Media in Different Locations: There is also evidence to indicate that where one lives affects the impact of the media upon one's level of fear.

We find, for example, that individuals living in the suburbs are most affected by reading of violent crimes in newspapers and seeing reports of such crimes on TV. A partial explanation of this may be that suburbanites receive a large portion of their information about crime from the newspapers and TV broadcasts originating in large cities. For city dwellers themselves, the impact of the media may be somewhat "washed out" by the direct exposure city residents have to the risks of city living. People in small cities and rural areas have local news sources which may not carry as much news of violent crime, for as we have shown there is actually less crime to report. Thus, because they receive more crime-related information than residents of small cities and rural areas, and they are not as saturated by direct contact with crime incidents as those living in large cities, suburbanites are more affected by media accounts of violent crime.

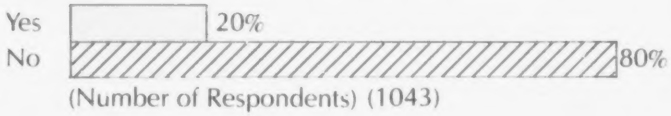
Impact of Media Exposure on Concrete Fear in Different Locations

Concrete Fear	Reading About Violent Crime in Newspapers							
	Rural		Suburbs		Small Cities		Large Cities	
	Daily	Less Than Daily	Daily	Less Than Daily	Daily	Less Than Daily	Daily	Less Than Daily
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
High Fear	33	28	48	25	44	37	56	40
Moderate to Low Fear	67	72	52	75	56	63	44	60
(Number of Respondents)	(101)	(99)	(144)	(89)	(215)	(156)	(154)	(60)
% of Total Sample	51	49	62	38	58	42	71	29
Gamma	.07		.38		.16		.30	

Concrete Fear	Hearing Reports of Violent Crime on Television							
	Rural		Suburbs		Small Cities		Large Cities	
	Daily	Less Than Daily	Daily	Less Than Daily	Daily	Less Than Daily	Daily	Less Than Daily
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
High Fear	33	24	45	30	42	39	54	43
Moderate to Low Fear	67	76	55	70	58	61	46	57
(Number of Respondents)	(150)	(50)	(158)	(71)	(263)	(105)	(163)	(54)
% of Total Sample	75	25	69	31	72	28	75	25
Gamma	.22		.18		.08		.20	

Knowing A Victim: The survey discovered that one out of five respondents know someone who has been held up by an armed robber in the past two years. Of these respondents, 60% expressed a high level of fear, as compared with 36% of those who did not know someone who had been robbed. This confirms the common-sense perception that when crime "hits close to home" it has a significant effect.

Do You Know Someone Who Has Been Held Up By an Armed Robber in the Past Two Years?



Impact of Knowing Someone Who Has Been Robbed on Concrete Fear

	Know Someone Who Has Been Robbed	Does Not Know Someone Who Has Been Robbed
	%	%
High Fear	60	36
Moderate to Low Fear	40	64
(Number of Respondents)	(209)	(834)
% of Total Sample	20	80
Gamma .39		

Concrete Fear

° Social Disadvantage

It would appear to be sound logic to assume that the socially disadvantaged - those with low levels of income, education and occupational status - would have higher levels of fear concerning specific crimes than more affluent individuals. The data reveal, however, that this is simply not the case: disadvantaged people do not have significantly higher levels of concrete fear than the affluent.

This finding seems paradoxical, since the disadvantaged are subject to higher rates of victimization than the affluent.

One possible explanation is that people with higher levels of formal schooling, as we have stated, have access to more sources of information by virtue of their education. As we have suggested previously, individuals with greater exposure to information are likely to have a higher degree of concrete fear. Thus, we would expect that the disadvantaged, who tend to have lower levels of education, would tend to exhibit comparatively less concrete fear than the privileged.

Impact of Household Income on Concrete Fear

Concrete Fear	Household Income		
	Under $11,000	$11,000 to $25,999	$26,000 or Over
	%	%	%
High	43	40	40
Moderate To Low	57	60	60
(Number of Respondents)	(304)	(423)	(191)
% of Total Sample	33	46	21

Gamma .05

Impact of Occupational Status on Concrete Fear

Concrete Fear	Occupational Status		
	Blue Collar	White-Collar	Owner/Manager Professional
	%	%	%
High	43	36	42
Low	57	64	58
(Number of Respondents)	(449)	(304)	(265)
% of Total Sample	44	33	26

Gamma .09

- Isolation

Isolation may be experienced by groups which are not integrated into the mainstream of occupational, social and family activities. If isolation were to have an effect on fear of personal victimization, it would become most apparent in groups such as the old, those not employed full time, and the previously married - that is, the widowed, separated or divorced. These groups are in some sense severed from major social functions in our society. Those who are not fully employed are not in the "productive mainstream" of the classically defined American way of life; the old have "grown removed" from it too. The previously married have experienced a loss which has forcibly torn them from a standard pattern, as well as from their desired mode of living.

Concrete Fear

Curiously, however, concrete fear is not affected by social isolation. Perhaps this is because the isolated are less likely to be exposed to multiple sources of information, information transmitted through the workplace, family, or community channels.

Impact of Employment Status on Concrete Fear

Concrete Fear	**Employment Status**	
	Full-Time	Other
	%	%
High Fear	41	39
Moderate to Low Fear	59	61
(Number of Respondents)	(515)	(494)
% of Total Sample	51	49
Gamma .004		

Impact of Marital Status on Concrete Fear

Concrete Fear	**Marital Status**		
	Married	Single	Divorced, Widowed, Separated
	%	%	%
High Fear	39	45	43
Moderate to Low Fear	61	55	57
(Number of Respondents)	(637)	(184)	(213)
% of Total Sample	62	18	20
Gamma .01			

Cumulative Experience

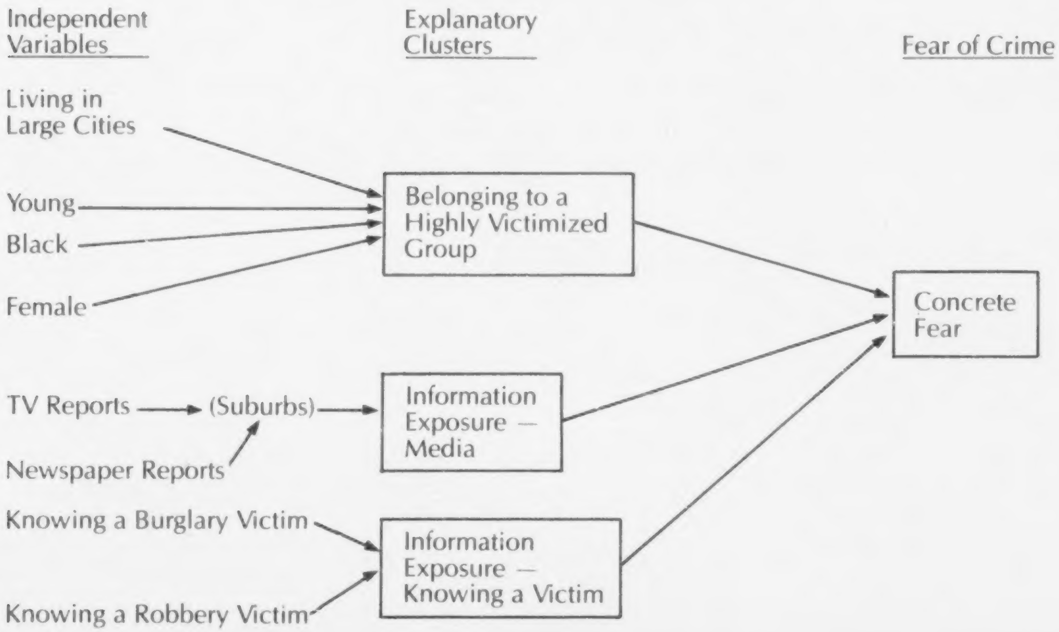
There is another "untold story" in terms of crime statistics. While the annual incidence of crime appears relatively small, a violent crime that occurs will long be remembered, both by the victims and by those close to them with whom they share the experience. People who have been robbed or beaten will carry their fear of victimization far beyond the end of the calendar year in which it happened, and so will those who know them.

Naturally, the high level of fear discovered by the present study is not a result of people reading annual crime statistics. These fears, rather, spring from a lifetime of hearing about, reading about and seeing reports of crime - and perhaps having the experience of being a victim oneself.

Summary

The fear of violent crime is a pervasive influence in American life. Four out of every ten citizens are highly fearful of being victimized. Among the particularly fearful are people who live in large cities, the young, women, blacks and those with higher levels of formal education. These fears are partially accounted for by belonging to segments of the population with high rates of victimization, and by exposure to information.

FACTORS AFFECTING CONCRETE FEAR
A DESCRIPTIVE CHART


Independent Variables
Explanatory Clusters
Fear of Crime
Living in Large Cities
Young
Black
Female
Belonging to a Highly Victimized Group
Concrete Fear
TV Reports
(Suburbs)
Newspaper Reports
Information Exposure — Media
Knowing a Burglary Victim
Knowing a Robbery Victim
Information Exposure — Knowing a Victim

Chapter Two

Formless Fear: The Fear of Non-Specific Threat in the Community

Formless Fear

In constructing the study, one of the basic research questions was whether or not fear is one-dimensional. Perhaps a fear exists that is quite different in nature than the fear of specific acts of violence, a fear that has more to do with the non-specific anxiety about lurking dangers that afflicts us all at one time or another. This "formless fear" is a diffuse feeling that we are somehow not safe in our environment: in our homes, our neighborhood, our community at large.

To determine if this fear affects people in different ways and for different reasons than does concrete fear, a measure of formless fear was devised.

Formless Fear: A Barometer

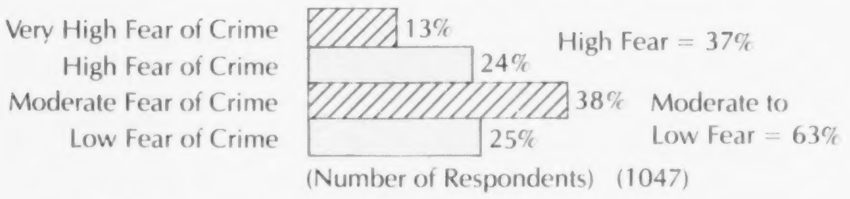
To establish a barometer of this non-specific fear of threats in the community, our analysis combines six measures of fear:

This index measures how safe people feel:

- Being out alone during the day and at night in the central business district or main shopping center
- Being out alone during the day and at night in the neighborhood
- Being alone at home during the day and at night

The accompanying table shows that nearly four out of ten Americans have high levels of formless fear. In the previous chapter, it was shown that a slightly larger number of Americans have high levels of concrete fear. However, as this chapter shall show, each fear is different in who it affects and why. The following table shows that while those experiencing the two types of fear do overlap, they are nevertheless distinct. Forty percent (40%) of these reporting a high level of formless fear experience a low level of concrete fear.

Formless Fear



Relation Between Formless Fear and Concrete Fear

Concrete Fear	**Formless Fear** Moderate to Low %	High %
High	29	60
Moderate to Low	71	40
(Number of Respondents)	(660)	(387)
% of Total Sample	63	37
Gamma .44		

Concrete fear and formless fear have their own distinctive characteristics. As can be seen from the following chart, the difference between the two forms of fear is essentially that concrete fear results from distinct visions of violence that an individual carries with him at all times, while formless fear concerns a vague sense of being unsafe in one's everyday environment.

Formless Fear

Two Types Of Fear

	Concrete Fear	**Formless Fear**
Type of threat	Specific acts of violence	Diffuse, vague feeling of being unsafe
Focus of threat	Directed at the individual	Group related, in the context of the home (family), neighbors, and the community at large
Level of personal threat	High	Not as high
Location	Anywhere	Near home, in the everyday environment

Groups Affected By Both Types of Fear

By analyzing separately for specific demographic groups the set of questions contained in the Formless Fear Index, we found that there are three key groups that show high levels of formless fear who also show high levels of concrete fear.

People living in large cities express higher levels of formless fear than inhabitants of other areas. Over half (54%) show high levels of this fear as compared with about a third of those living in other areas - small cities (33%), suburbs (30%) and the countryside (31%).

Women are, once again, more fearful than men. Forty-eight percent (48%) of women have high levels of formless fear, as contrasted with only 26% of men.

Blacks, who expressed a somewhat higher fear of specific acts of violence than whites, exhibit even higher comparative levels of formless fear. Forty-eight percent (48%) of blacks are highly fearful in their community environment, while 34% of whites show an equal level of fear.

Impact of Place of Residence on Formless Fear

Formless Fear	Place of Residence			
	Rural	Suburb	Small City	Large City
	%	%	%	%
High Fear	31	30	33	54
Moderate to Low Fear	69	70	67	46
(Number of Respondents)	(200)	(233)	(370)	(218)
% of Total Sample	20	23	36	21
Gamma .23				

Impact of Gender on Formless Fear

Formless Fear	Gender	
	Male	Female
	%	%
High Fear	26	48
Moderate to Low Fear	74	52
(Number of Respondents)	(492)	(544)
% of Total Sample	48	52
Gamma .44		

Impact of Race on Formless Fear

Formless Fear	Race	
	White	Black
	%	%
High Fear	34	48
Moderate to Low Fear	66	52
(Number of Respondents)	(860)	(118)
% of Total Sample	88	12
Gamma .18		

Groups More Affected By Formless Fear than by Concrete Fear

Beyond the three groups cited above, there are several groups which do not express uncommon amounts of concrete fear, but do display an extraordinary level of formless fear:

Those with the lowest incomes have higher levels of formless fear than the affluent. Nearly half (49%) of those with annual household incomes below $11,000 have high levels of formless fear, compared with 26% of those with incomes over $26,000.

Formless Fear

Among occupational groups, blue-collar workers are the most fearful (44%), compared with 27% of white-collar workers.

Forty-five percent (45%) of those with some high school education or less show high levels of formless fear, compared with 35% of high school graduates and 38% of college graduates. This finding presents a contrast with the Index of Concrete Fear, which showed higher levels of fear for college graduates than for the less educated groups.

Those not working full time, who are retired, unemployed, or working part time are significantly more fearful than the full-time employed. Forty-six percent (46%) of retired individuals and 43 % of other people not working full time have a high degree of inchoate fear, compared to 30% of those working full time.

Those who have experienced a marital loss, who are divorced, separated or widowed, are far more fearful than single or married people. Forty-eight percent (48%) of divorced or separated respondents and 49% of widowed respondents are fearful of undefined threats of danger, compared with 33% of single and 34% of married individuals.

The old are the most fearful age group. Forty-three percent (43%) of those 60 and over express high levels of fear, and 41% of those 50 to 59 voice similar levels of fear. The most secure group are those in the 30 to 39 age bracket, 30% of whom express high fear. Of the young, ages 18 to 29, 36% indicate high levels of undefined fear. This finding is in sharp contrast to that revealed in the Concrete Fear Index, which found the young to be by far the most fearful.

Impact of Household Income on Formless Fear

Formless Fear	Household Income		
	$26,000 or Over	$11,000 to $25,999	Under $11,000
	%	%	%
High Fear	26	33	49
Moderate to Low Fear	74	67	51
(Number of Respondents)	(190)	(424)	(304)
% of Total Sample	20	46	34
Gamma .21			

Impact of Occupational Status on Formless Fear

Formless Fear	Occupational Status		
	Owner/Manager Professional	Salaried White Collar	Blue Collar
	%	%	%
High Fear	34	27	44
Moderate to Low Fear	66	73	56
(Number of Respondents)	(265)	(304)	(449)
% of Total Sample	26	30	44
Gamma .05			

Impact of Education on Formless Fear

Formless Fear	Education		
	College Graduate	High School Graduate or Some College	Some High School or Less
	%	%	%
High Fear	38	35	45
Moderate to Low Fear	62	65	55
(Number of Respondents)	(166)	(511)	(355)
% of Total Sample	16	50	34
Gamma .15			

Impact of Employment Status on Formless Fear

Formless Fear	Employment Status		
	Working Full Time	Retired	Other
	%	%	%
High Fear	30	46	43
Moderate to Low Fear	70	54	57
(Number of Respondents)	(515)	(193)	(315)
% of Total Sample	50	19	31
Gamma .21			

Impact of Marital Status on Formless Fear

Formless Fear	Marital Status			
	Single	Married	Divorced/ Separated	Widowed
	%	%	%	%
High Fear	33	34	48	49
Moderate to Low Fear	67	66	52	51
(Number of Respondents)	(187)	(637)	(100)	(113)
% of Total Sample	18	62	10	10
Gamma .11				

Impact of Age on Formless Fear

Formless Fear	Age				
	18 to 29	30 to 39	40 to 49	50 to 59	60 and Over
	%	%	%	%	%
High Fear	36	30	34	41	43
Moderate to Low Fear	64	70	66	59	57
(Number of Respondents)	(283)	(191)	(160)	(158)	(237)
% of Total Sample	28	19	16	15	22
Gamma .08					

Why Do Different Groups Have Different Fears?

Chapter One revealed that actual rates of victimization and information exposure are linked strongly to fear of specific violent acts while factors of isolation and social disadvantage are not. Our analysis reveals that the factors affecting formless fear in the community are quite different. Those differences emerge clearly when we analyze our findings by each of the four explanatory clusters introduced in Chapter One.

Victimization

As we have seen, actual rates of victimization are an important element in explaining why particular groups fear becoming victims of violent crimes. Rates of victimization are useful only as a partial explanation of why some groups are among the most fearful in the community. Chapter One illustrates that inhabitants of large cities, women, and blacks have sound statistical justification for their fears of victimization. These groups demonstrate high levels of non-specific fear as well. However, there are several groups exhibiting high levels of formless fear who do suffer noticeable rates of victimization and yet do not express high levels of concrete fear. These include those with the lowest incomes, blue-collar workers, the less educated, the old, those who are not among the full-time employed, and those who have experienced a marital loss.

Surprisingly, young people, shown in Chapter One to be among the most victimized groups, do not exhibit particularly high levels of fear in the context of the community. The explanation for the formless fears of these groups must go beyond a simple citation of rates of victimization.

Information Exposure

In Chapter One, the one group exhibiting high fear of victimization which was not in actuality highly victimized was the more educated. The presence of this group among the list of the fearful was explained by their greater access to information, both by virtue of their schooling and the more extensive information sources accessible to them in their daily lives.

Information access and exposure in terms of TV and newspapers, as can be seen from the following tables, are not useful in explaining the addition of several groups to the ranks of the fearful in the context of community anxiety. This is true, it would seem, because the source of "information" about the home and neighborhood is primarily one's own eyes and ears rather than the media. This contrast can be illustrated with an example. People who know a victim of an armed robbery or burglary are much more likely to exhibit higher fear than those who do not. This aspect of information exposure has a direct effect on both concrete fear and formless fear, while exposure to TV and radio only appear to affect concrete fear.

The concept of information exposure is useful in understanding formless fear in relation to youth who show high fear of specific crimes, but do not exhibit particularly high levels of the less-defined fear. It is plausible that young people in our mobile society are less likely to have developed strong ties to their local communities; less anchored and rooted, they are less likely to be influenced by their perceptions of and information about the neighborhoods. This hypothesis receives strong support from the finding that nearly half (46%) of those in the 18 to 29 age range are likely to have lived only one to two years in their present neighborhood, while substantially fewer older citizens have lived in their neighborhoods, for such a short time. (Only 31% of people ages 30 to 39, 12% of those ages 40 to 49, 10% of those 50 to 59, and 4% of those over 60 have lived in their neighborhoods for a period of one to two years).

Because youth have weak ties with the community as compared with other groups, they may be more affected by other factors; among them, visions conveyed by the media.

Fear of specific violent crimes may be reflective of images that an individual carries with him, regardless of his day-to-day environment. Perhaps these images have a greater impact on young individuals because the media, in a special sense, have become their environment. They may be more attuned to its information than to information transmitted by their everyday environments.

Impact of Frequency of Reading About Violent Crime in Newspapers on Formless Fear

Formless Fear	Frequency of Reading About Violent Crime in Newspapers	
	Less Than Daily	Daily
	%	%
High Fear	62	63
Moderate to Low Fear	38	37
(Number of Respondents)	(316)	(629)
% of Total Sample	40	60
Gamma .04		

Impact of Seeing Violent Crime News on Television on Formless Fear

Formless Fear	Seeing Violent Crime News on Television	
	Less Than Daily	Daily
	%	%
High Fear	37	37
Moderate to Low Fear	63	63
(Number of Respondents)	(292)	(746)
% of Total Sample	28	72
Gamma .00		

Impact of Age on Length of Residence in Neighborhood

Length of Residence in Neighborhood	Age				
	18-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60 and above
	%	%	%	%	%
2 Years Or Less	46	31	12	10	4
3-10 Years	30	49	36	15	35
More Than 10 Years	24	20	52	75	61
(Number of Respondents)	(283)	(191)	(160)	(158)	(237)
% of Total Sample	28	19	16	15	22
Gamma .08					

The Disadvantaged

Although fear of specific acts of violence affects the affluent, formless fear does not. A possible explanation for this finding is that the affluent receive much of their information about the possibilities of victimization via the media. As noted in Chapter One, surburbanites appear more profoundly affected by reports of violent crime than those living elsewhere. Yet when they get on their own "turf" they feel relatively secure since they are likely to live in less congested, more tranquil neighborhoods. The "information" that comes through their eyes and ears concerning their community tells the affluent that they are safe.

Our data also reveal that low income, low occupational status and low education have a striking impact on formless fear, the fear more closely tied to perceptions of one's community. This supports the commonplace understanding that the poor and disadvantaged are likely to live in an environment of economic desperation which is conducive to high rates of crime. The study makes it clear that such neighborhoods are even more conducive to high rates of *fear* among their inhabitants. This is borne out by the finding that of those with incomes over $26,000, 82% say "all" their neighbors are law-abiding. Considerably fewer people with incomes under $11,000 (62%) say this. Similarly, 73% of whites say "all" their neighbors are law-abiding while only 50% of blacks, who have a history of social disadvantage, say "all" of their neighbors abide by the law.

Formless Fear

It is reasonable to conclude that the affluent absorb a substantial amount of information leading to fear from the media. The less affluent are exposed to a substantial amount of crime-related information leading to fear within their own communities.

Impact of Household Income on Perception of Neighbors

Perception of Neighbors	Household Income		
	$26,000 or Over	$11,000 to $25,999	Under $11,000
	%	%	%
All are law abiding	82	66	62
Some are law abiding	18	34	38
(Number of Respondents)	(190)	(423)	(302)
% of Total Sample	21	46	33
Gamma .24			

Impact of Race on Perception of Neighbors

Perception of Neighbors	Race	
	White	Black
	%	%
All are law abiding	73	50
Some are law abiding	27	50
(Number of Respondents)	(858)	(166)
% of Total Sample	84	16
Gamma .44		

Isolation

Isolation, as defined in the first chapter, represents being removed from the mainstream of social activities. Isolation was shown not to have a significant impact on fear of specific acts of violence. This study discovers, however, that isolation does have an important bearing on formless fear in the community. As shown, such groups as the old, those not employed full time, and the widowed, divorced and separated do experience particularly high levels of formless fear.

By contrast, it is noteworthy that middle-aged individuals in the 30-50 age range, particularly those 30 to 39, exhibit the least amount of formless fear. This finding may indicate that middle age is a time when individuals are most integrated into the social mainstream of their community.

Fear in the Cities

Given the three factors which appear to have the most impact on formless fear - victimization, disadvantage, and isolation - it is not surprising that high levels of community anxiety are felt by large-city dwellers. Each of these three influences is at work in metropolitan centers.

The largest cities have the highest rates of actual victimization. The cities also have historically been the homes of the disadvantaged. In addition, socially isolated individuals may sometimes feel even more isolated in a congested city and may display little sense of neighborhood cohesion.

Formless Fear

The lack of community identification is confirmed by the study data. Fewer individuals in the bigger cities are long-time residents than individuals living elsewhere. Our data show, for example, that one-third (33%) of those in large cities have lived in their neighborhoods over 10 years, while over half those in rural areas (55%) have lived in their neighborhoods more than 10 years. Forty-two percent (42%) of respondents in small cities, and 45% of respondents in suburbs have resided this long in their neighborhoods.

We also find, for example, that only half (52%) of city dwellers feel that if they were attacked, neighbors would intervene to stop the attack and call the police. Over three-fourths (77%) of rural residents say that neighbors would personally try to stop the crime and call the police, as do 67% of those in small cities, and 65% of those living in the suburbs.

Finally, city inhabitants believe themselves to be in a riskier environment than those living elsewhere. Only about half (48%) feel that "practically all" their neighbors are law-abiding, compared with three-fourths (73%) of respondents living in small cities suburbs (76%), and the countryside (75%). Large-city residents display less community cohesion than residents of other areas.

Impact of Place of Residence on Length of Residence in Neighborhood

Length of Residence in Neighborhood	Place of Residence			
	Rural	Suburb	Small City	Large City
	%	%	%	%
2 Years or Less	18	24	22	29
3-10 Years	27	31	36	38
More Than 10 Years	55	45	42	33
(Number of Respondents)	(200)	(233)	(370)	(218)
% of Total Sample	20	23	36	21

Gamma .16

Impact of Place of Residence on Belief that Neighbors Would Help in the Case of Attack

Belief That Neighbors Would Help in the Case of Attack	Rural	Suburb	Small City	Large City
	%	%	%	%
Believe They Would Call Police	23	35	33	48
Believe They Would Call Police and Personally Intervene	77	65	67	52
(Number of Respondents)	(176)	(206)	(344)	(197)
% of Total Sample	19	22	37	22

Gamma .24

Impact of Place of Residence on Perception of Neighbors

Perception of Neighbors	Place of Residence			
	Rural	Suburb	Small City	Large City
	%	%	%	%
All are law abiding	75	76	73	48
Some are law abiding	25	24	27	52
(Number of Respondents)	(199)	(232)	(370)	(216)
% of Total Sample	20	23	36	21

Gamma .30

Formless Fear

The Effects of Formless Fear

The clearest effect of the community-related formless fear is that vast numbers of Americans are restricting activities. One out of every four respondents say there are neighborhood places they used to go to at night but are now afraid to go to because of the threat of crime.

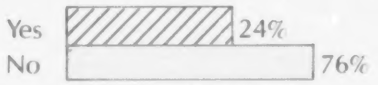
Applying the survey findings to the total population, this suggests that the freedom of almost 40 million Americans to travel in their own communities has been inhibited by a concern for safety. This is a shocking finding when one considers that the neighborhood is where people ought to feel most secure.

Not surprisingly, among the sizeable number of people who believe crime has increased in their neighborhoods over the past year, there is an even greater tendency to restrict ordinary neighborhood activities. Thirty-nine percent (39%) of those who perceive their neighborhoods as deteriorating say that there are neighborhood places they no longer go to because of fear of crime. Among demographic groups, city dwellers, those with the lowest income, those with the least education and blacks are the most likely to say that there are places they have stopped frequenting because of a perceived threat to safety.

People in the large cities are by far more likely to change their travel patterns due to fear of crime than people in smaller communities. More than one out of three (37%) large-city residents say they no longer go to some places, compared with only 21% in smaller cities, 23% in the suburbs, and a mere 16% in rural areas.

Those with low incomes are almost twice as likely as those with high incomes to say they have changed their travel patterns. Thirty percent (30%) of the lower income group say they have made such changes, compared with 16% of those with high levels of income. Thirty percent (30%) of those with only some high school education say they have restricted their activities, compared with 18% of respondents with college educations. Thirty-four percent (34%) of blacks restrict their travel, in contrast with 22% of whites.

Are There Any Neighborhood Places Where You Used to Go at Night but Are Now Afraid to Go Because of the Threat of Crime?



(Number of Respondents) (1027)

Impact Of Perceived Neighborhood Crime Trends On Restricting Neighborhood Travel

Restricting Travel To Parts Of Neighborhood	Perceived Neighborhood Crime Trends	
	Crime Staying the Same or Decreasing	Crime Increasing
	%	%
Yes	20	39
No	80	61
(Number of Respondents)	(782)	(213)
% of Total Sample	79	21
Gamma .45		

Impact of Place of Residence on Restricting Travel in Neighborhood

Restricting Travel to Parts of Neighborhood	Place of Residence			
	Rural	Suburb	Small City	Large City
	%	%	%	%
Yes	16	23	21	37
No	84	77	79	63
(Number of Respondents)	(195)	(232)	(363)	(217)
% of Total Sample	19	23	36	22
Gamma .24				

Impact of Household Income on Restricting Travel in Neighborhood

Restricting Travel to Parts of Neighborhood	Household Income		
	$26,000 or Over	$11,000 to $25,999	Under $11,000
	%	%	%
Yes	16	24	30
No	84	76	70
(Number of Respondents)	(187)	(418)	(297)
% of Total Sample	21	46	33
Gamma .23			

Impact of Education on Restricting Travel in Neighborhood

Restricting Travel to Parts of Neighborhood	Education		
	College Graduate	High School Graduate or Some College	Some High School or Less
	%	%	%
Yes	18	23	30
No	82	77	70
(Number of Respondents)	(307)	(363)	(342)
% of Total Sample	30	36	34
Gamma .23			

Impact of Race on Restricting Travel in Neighborhood

Restricting Travel to Parts of Neighborhood	Race	
	White	Black
	%	%
Yes	22	34
No	78	66
(Number of Respondents)	(843)	(167)
% of Total Sample	83	17
Gamma .30		

The Effects of Formless Fear On Specific Activities

To obtain more precise information about the way fear of crime is affecting ordinary activities in large and small cities, suburbs and the countryside, our survey examined the influence of formless fear, the fear more related to community, on involvement in four typical evening activities:

- Shopping
- Entertainment (going to restaurants, theatres, etc.)
- Visiting friends
- Participating in social or community-group activities in the neighborhoods

In large cities, as expected, people curtail their involvement in all of the above activities to a greater degree than people who live elsewhere. A majority (55%) of highly fearful city dwellers say that during the past week they did not go out shopping in the evening, compared with a minority (30%) who are not fearful. Likewise, a majority (63%) who show high levels of fear say that during the past week they never went out for an evening's entertainment, compared with a minority (42%) who show low levels of fear. Nearly half (49%) who are very fearful say that they did not visit friends in the evening during the past week, compared with 34% who are not very fearful.

Despite these findings, community anxiety does not have an effect on whether or not large-city inhabitants participate in neighborhood social or civic activities. It may be that such "special" activities offer sufficient attraction to overcome fears that inhibit involvement in more routine activities. It may also be that such activities function to reinforce feelings of security and solidarity within the neighborhood, and thus act to some extent as an antidote to fear in the community.

In small cities, there is a much smaller, but nonetheless, consistent, effect of fear on the restriction of community activities.

Like their counterparts in the large cities, small-city inhabitants with high fear tend to avoid shopping at night. Seventy-seven percent (77%) of small-city residents who experience high levels of formless fear report they do not go shopping at night, compared with 53% who express low fear. The impact on other activities - visiting, participating in neighborhood group activities, and going out for entertainment - is less dramatic.

In the suburbs, there seems to be virtually no restriction of evening activities as a result of high levels of fear. It seems likely that since most travel in the suburbs is by car, an individual feels "fortified" by his automobile, and thus suburbanites have the advantage of a sort of protective "armor" that city dwellers tend to eschew in pursuit of many localized activities.

In rural areas, as in large cities, fear does have a definite impact on activity. Three-fourths (75%) of those showing high levels of community anxiety did not seek evening entertainment in the neighborhood in the past week, compared with about half (53%) of those with lower levels of anxiety. Contrary to the situation in large cities, however, there is a sizeable difference between those with high fear (78%) and low fear (59%) who tend to be more frequent participants in social and community group activities. Also unlike large cities, there are few differences between the highly fearful and less fearful in evening shopping patterns and visiting of friends. It is likely that many entertainment and social activities involve travel over a considerable distance for rural dwellers. Since these activities may be more of a chore for rural dwellers than for suburban and urban dwellers, they may be more susceptible to any reluctance brought on by fear. Visiting friends and obtaining provisions, however, may be more immediate routine activities engaged in by all.

Impact of Formless Fear on Neighborhood Activities — In Large Cities

Shopping in One's Neighborhood at Night — In Large Cities	Formless Fear	
	Moderate to Low Fear	High Fear
	%	%
Not at all in the past week	30	55
At least once in the past week	70	45
(Number of Respondents)	(110)	(108)
% of Total Sample	51	49
Gamma .32		

Going Out for Evening Entertainment in Neighborhood — In Large Cities	Formless Fear	
	Moderate to Low Fear	High Fear
	%	%
Not at all in past week	42	63
At least once in past week	58	37
(Number of Respondents)	(110)	(108)
% of Total Sample	51	49
Gamma .28		

Visiting in the Evening — in Large Cities	Formless Fear	
	Moderate to Low Fear	High Fear
	%	%
Not at all in the past week	34	49
At least once in the past week	66	51
(Number of Respondents)	(110)	(107)
% of Total Sample	51	49
Gamma .20		

Participating in Evening Neighborhood Activities — In Large Cities	Formless Fear	
	Moderate to Low Fear	High Fear
	%	%
Not at all in the past week	69	70
At least once in the past week	31	30
(Number of Respondents)	(110)	(108)
% of Total Sample	51	49
Gamma .06		

Impact of Formless Fear on Neighborhood Activities — In Small Cities

Shopping in One's Neighborhood at Night — In Small Cities	Formless Fear	
	Moderate to Low Fear	High Fear
	%	%
Not at all in the past week	53	77
At least once in the past week	47	23
(Number of Respondents)	(268)	(99)
% of Total Sample	73	27
Gamma .31		

Participating in Evening Neighborhood Activities — In Small Cities	Formless Fear	
	Moderate to Low Fear	High Fear
	%	%
Not at all in the past week	65	73
At least once in the past week	35	27
(Number of Respondents)	(268)	(99)
% of Total Sample	73	27
Gamma .08		

Visiting in the Evening — In Small Cities	Formless Fear	
	Moderate to Low Fear	High Fear
	%	%
Not at all in the past week	41	49
At least once in the past week	59	51
(Number of Respondents)	(268)	(99)
% of Total Sample	73	27
Gamma .11		

Going Out for Evening Entertainment in Neighborhood — In Small Cities	Formless Fear	
	Moderate to Low Fear	High Fear
	%	%
Not at all in the past week	52	59
At least once in the past week	48	41
(Number of Respondents)	(268)	(99)
% of Total Sample	73	27
Gamma .05		

Impact of Formless Fear on Neighborhood Activities — In Suburbs

Shopping in One's Neighborhood at Night — In Suburbs	**Formless Fear**	
	Moderate to Low Fear	High Fear
	%	%
Not at all in the past week	49	48
At least once in the past week	51	52
(Number of Respondents)	(174)	(60)
% of Total Sample	75	25
Gamma .03		

Going Out for Evening Entertainment in Neighborhood — In Suburbs	**Formless Fear**	
	Moderate to Low Fear	High Fear
	%	%
Not at all in the past week	51	52
At least once in the past week	49	48
(Number of Respondents)	(174)	(58)
% of Total Sample	75	25
Gamma .00		

Visiting in the Evening — In Suburbs	**Formless Fear**	
	Moderate to Low Fear	High Fear
	%	%
Not at all in the past week	42	47
At least once in the past week	58	53
(Number of Respondents)	(171)	(60)
% of Total Sample	75	25
Gamma .13		

Participating in Evening Neighborhood Activities — In Suburbs	**Formless Fear**	
	Moderate to Low Fear	High Fear
	%	%
Not at all in the past week	73	70
At least once in the past week	27	30
(Number of Respondents)	(172)	(56)
% of Total Sample	75	25
Gamma .18		

Impact of Formless Fear on Neighborhood Activities — In Rural Areas

Going out for Evening Entertainment in Neighborhood — In Rural Areas	**Formless Fear**	
	Moderate to Low Fear	High Fear
	%	%
Not at all in past week	53	75
At least once in past week	47	25
(Number of Respondents)	(149)	(48)
% of Total Sample	75	25
Gamma .20		

Participating in Evening Neighborhood Activities — In Rural Areas	**Formless Fear**	
	Moderate to Low Fear	High Fear
	%	%
Not at all in the past week	59	78
At least once in the past week	41	22
(Number of Respondents)	(148)	(49)
% of Total Sample	75	25
Gamma .21		

Shopping in One's Neighborhood at Night — In Rural Areas	**Formless Fear**	
	Moderate to Low Fear	High Fear
	%	%
Not at all in the past week	61	69
At least once in the past week	39	31
(Number of Respondents)	(150)	(49)
% of Total Sample	75	25
Gamma .15		

Visiting in the Evening — In Rural Areas	**Formless Fear**	
	Moderate to Low Fear	High Fear
	%	%
Not at all in the past week	50	57
At least once in the past week	50	43
(Number of Respondents)	(149)	(49)
% of Total Sample	75	25
Gamma .16		

Formless Fear

Moving Elsewhere

A proportionately small but nonetheless significant number of respondents say that their neighborhoods are dangerous enough to cause them to think seriously of moving elsewhere.

Six percent (6%) of the sample - which, if applied to the total adult population, represents about 9 million people - feel that they may be approaching a point where they can no longer live in their present neighborhoods. About one-fourth (26%) of respondents showing very high levels of fear state that they are actually considering relocating.

Impact of Formless Fear On Thinking Seriously About Moving Somewhere Else.

Thinking About Moving Somewhere Else	Formless Fear			
	Low Fear	Moderate Fear	High Fear	Very High Fear
	%	%	%	%
Yes	3	1	6	26
No	97	99	94	74
(Number of Respondents)	(266)	(392)	(252)	(135)
% of Total Sample	25	38	24	13
Gamma .69				

A Deteriorating Situation

We have seen that fear in the community is a problem of immense scope that has severe effects on our everyday lives. And unfortunately, our research indicates that the problem appears to be worsening. Large numbers of people believe that their neighborhoods are deteriorating. One out of five (21%) say that crime has increased in their neighborhoods in just the past year. This statistic has sobering implications for the future, especially when it is noted that perceived neighborhood crime trends have a severe impact on levels of fear in the community. Fifty-six percent (56%) of those who feel crime in their neighborhoods is increasing have high levels of formless fear; only 32% of those who feel crime is staying the same or decreasing have such a high degree of fear.

It appears likely that if things continue as they are, there will be even greater fear of crime in communities across the nation.

Has Violent Crime In Your Neighborhood In The Past Year:

Crime Staying the Same or Decreasing	79%
Crime Increasing	21%
(Number of Respondents)	(1017)

Impact of Formless Fear on Perception of Neighborhood Crime Trends

Formless Fear	**Perceived Neighborhood Crime Trends**	
	Crime Increasing %	Crime Staying The Same Or Decreasing %
High	56	32
Moderate To Low	44	68
(Number of Respondents)	(213)	(796)
% of Total Sample	21	79
Gamma .47		

Pessimism in the Neighborhood, Pessimism in the Nation

The study finds that in a very real way negative perceptions of the crime situation in one's neighborhood effects an individual's outlook on the affairs of the nation.

The survey discovers, for example, that 73% of people who feel that crime is increasing in their neighborhoods feel that "the country is going downhill," while 60% of those who feel that neighborhood crime is staying the same or decreasing feel this way. The data also show that 72% of people who say they restrict their travel in their neighborhoods feel that the country is in decline, while 59% of those who do not restrict their travel feel this way. And of those who feel that crime in their neighborhoods is greater than average, 72% feel the nation is going downhill, compared with 60% of those who believe their neighborhoods have less than the average amount of crime.

Thus, while an unsettling majority of all Americans say the country is going downhill (63%), this pessimism is obviously exacerbated by perceptions that one's neighborhood is deteriorating.

There is one contradictory - and perhaps hopeful - finding that should be cited in this context. Nearly 4 out of 5 (79%) Americans feel that there is a "below average" amount of crime in their neighborhoods, while the remaining 1 out of 5 feels that the rate crime in their neighborhoods is "average or above." Obviously, 79% of Americans cannot live in neighborhoods with "below average" crime. There are several possible explanations for this unexpected perception of our communities. First, we may be willing to accept quite a high level of crime and deem it "average." Second, we apparently want to believe that our neighborhoods are safe - perhaps safer than they really are. Third, our sense of personal identity with our community may still be a strong element in our general outlook, despite the high level of fear and anxiety we are experiencing; and the continuing strength of this bond could be a significant asset in future attempts to reverse the downward trend of the nation's self esteem.

Impact of Perceived Neighborhood Crime Trends on Perceived Status of Country

Perceived Status Of Country	Perceived Neighborhood Crime Trends	
	Increasing	Decreasing Or Remaining The Same
	%	%
Going Downhill	73	60
Remaining The Same	27	40
(Number of Respondents)	(211)	(771)
% of Total Sample	22	78
Gamma .28		

Impact of Restricting Neighborhood Travel on Perceived Status of Country

Perceived Status Of Country	Restricting Travel To Parts Of Neighborhood	
	Yes	No
	%	%
Going Downhill	72	59
Improving Or Holding Its Own	28	41
(Number of Respondents)	(244)	(754)
% of Total Sample	24	76
Gamma .28		

Impact of Perceived Neighborhood Crime on Perceived Status of Country

Perceived Status Of Country	Perceived Neighborhood Crime	
	Average Or More	Less Than Average
	%	%
Going Downhill	72	60
Remaining The Same	28	40
(Number of Respondents)	(214)	(791)
% of Total Sample	21	79
Gamma .27		

Is the Country:

	%
Going Downhill	63%
Holding Its Own	34%
Improving	3%
(Number of Respondents)	(1016)

Does Your Neighborhood Have:

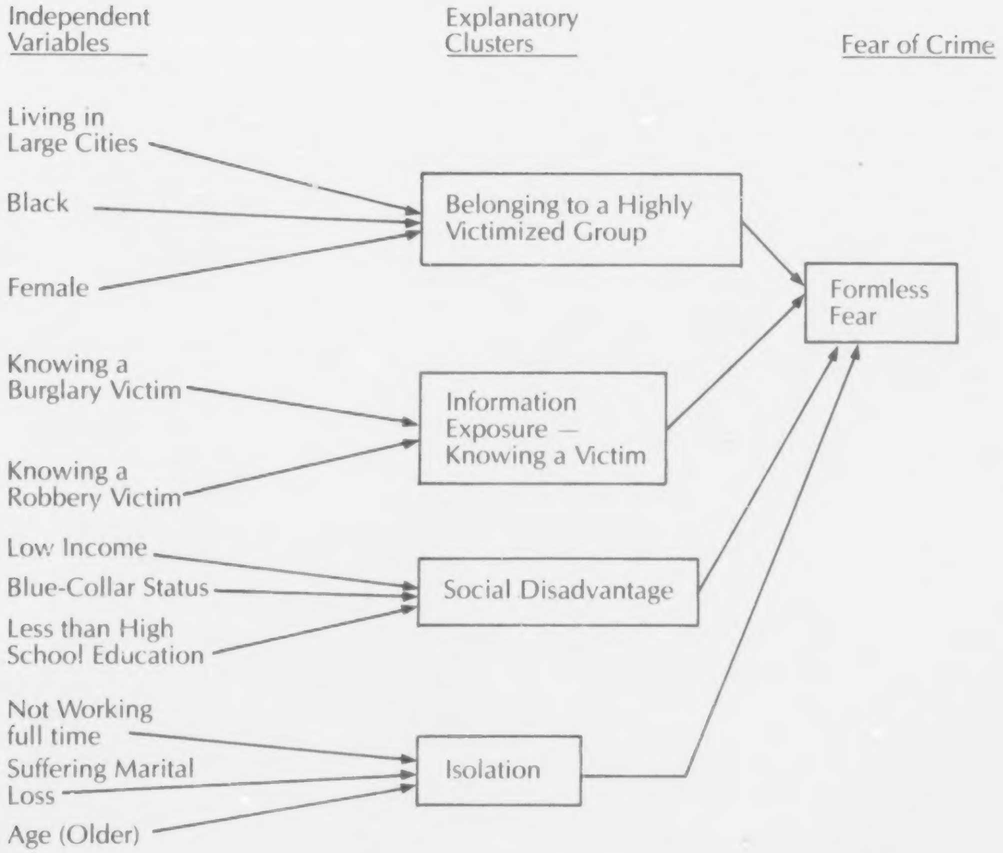
An Average Amount of Crime or More	21%
Less Than An Average Amount of Crime	79%
(Number of Respondents)	(1036)

Summary

There is a second dimension to fear of crime in America: the 'formless fear'' that concerns non-specific threats in the context of one's community. This formless fear is pervasive, strongly affecting four out of ten Americans. It is felt most strongly by those most frequently victimized (people living in large cities, women, and blacks) who also exhibit high levels of concrete fear. Formless fear, however, also plagues the socially disadvantaged (low income, blue-collar, less educated, the isolated, the old, those who are not fully employed, and individuals who have suffered a marital loss, either through divorce, separation or death). Thus, formless fear is a distinct phenomenon from concrete fear, since concrete fear is related to information exposure and rates of victimization and is not as prevalent among disadvantaged and isolated groups.

Fear in the community leads many Americans to restrict their activities, and it may also color their attitudes not only toward their neighborhoods, but toward the nation as well.

FACTORS AFFECTING FORMLESS FEAR
A DESCRIPTIVE CHART


Independent Variables
Explanatory Clusters
Fear of Crime
Living in Large Cities
Black
Female
Belonging to a Highly Victimized Group
Formless Fear
Knowing a Burglary Victim
Knowing a Robbery Victim
Information Exposure — Knowing a Victim
Low Income
Blue-Collar Status
Less than High School Education
Social Disadvantage
Not Working full time
Suffering Marital Loss
Age (Older)
Isolation

Chapter Three

Coping With Fear: Precautions in the Home, Outside the Home, and Gun Ownership

Coping With Fear

What People Do About Fear

The preceding chapters have defined two distinct kinds of fear, traced the characteristics of people most likely to exhibit these fears and examined the impact of formless fear on neighborhood activities. This chapter investigates further what people do about fear; how they cope with both concrete fear and formless fear. The first section details the variety of precautions people take in their households and away from home; the second section examines in depth the phenomenon of gun ownership in America.

This section explores several questions. First, what precautions are most frequently taken by American citizens? Second, which groups are most likely to take particular precautions? And lastly, what explanatory factors best account for variations in precautions people take?

Three types of protective measures are addressed:

- Those taken when going out
- Those taken around the home when going away for a weekend
- Those taken to protect one's home

The Precautions We Take Most Often

The picture that emerges from the data is that of an extremely cautious and security-minded America.

The study shows that when pursuing activities outside the home, seven out of ten people (70%) keep their car doors locked while in their cars in order to keep out intruders, six out of ten

(60%) dress plainly to avoid drawing attention to themselves, and six out of ten (60%) will telephone back to a friend or relative to say they have arrived home safe at home.

To protect their homes, the sweeping majority of Americans (87%) always lock their doors when they leave, and always identify people before letting them in (86%). And when going away for the weekend, 82% have someone watch their homes, while seven out of ten (69%) stop delivery of newspapers or mail, or have someone bring them in.

Ranking of Precautions

When Going Out	% Total Taking The Precaution	% Most of the time	% Sometimes
When riding or sitting in a car, do you keep the car doors locked to keep intruders out?	70	56	14
Do you dress plainly to avoid drawing attention?	60	53	7
Do you telephone back to a friend or relative to say you've arrived safe at home?	60	36	24
Do you plan your route to avoid potentially dangerous places?	47	36	11
When you go out after dark, do you get someone to go with you because of crime?	34	25	9
Do you take something with you at night that could be used for protection — like a dog, whistle, knife or gun?	25	16	9

Ranking of Precautions

(Continued)

When Going Away for the Weekend	Yes
	%
Do you have someone watch your home?	82
Do you stop delivery of newspapers or mail or have someone bring them in?	69
Do you set an automatic timer to switch lights on and off?	26

Protecting One's Home	Yes
	%
Do you protect your home by always keeping the doors locked when you go out?	87
Do you protect your home by always identifying people before letting them in?	86
Do you protect your home by owning a gun?	52
Do you protect your home by having extra locks on the doors?	51
Do you protect your home by engraving your valuables with some sort of identification?	36
Do you protect your home by having a burglar alarm?	15
Do you protect your home by having bars on some of your windows?	8

Who Takes the Most Precautions?

While anti-crime precautions are clearly part of American life as a whole, there are certain groups which take more precautions than others.

Women are far more likely to take precautions than men. This is especially true in the instance of getting someone to accompany them when going out after dark because of the threat of crime. Fifty-four percent (54%) of women say they do this, contrasted with a mere 15% of men. Women are also more likely to lock their car doors and plan their routes to avoid dangerous places.

Blacks are more inclined to take precautions than whites. For example, 78% say they dress plainly to avoid drawing attention to themselves, whereas 58% of whites do so. Blacks (48%) also more commonly have someone accompany them when going out after dark than do whites (32%).

Those with low incomes consistently take precautions to a greater degree than do those with higher incomes. Nearly half (48%) of those with incomes under $11,000 get someone to go with them after dark, compared with only 16% of those with incomes over $26,000. Three out of four people in the low-income group (74%) dress plainly to avoid drawing attention to themselves, compared with one out of two people (52%) in the high-income group.

Those who are not working full time also are more zealous in taking protective measures than those employed full time. Half the respondents in this group (49%) report they get someone to accompany them when going out at night, compared with a quarter (23%) of those who are fully employed. Seventy percent (70%) of individuals in this group dress plainly to avoid drawing attention, while 53% of individuals employed full time do this.

Residents of large cities are more likely to take precautions than people in rural areas. Forty-five percent (45%) of large-city dwellers ask to be accompanied after nightfall, compared with 29% of those living in the countryside. Residents of small cities and suburbs consistently fall in between this rural/metropolitan polarity.

People living in the South are somewhat more likely to take precautions than inhabitants of other regions. Seventy percent (70%) of Southerners, for example, dress plainly to avoid drawing attention, compared with 53% of people living in the West; 41% of those in the South have someone accompany them after dark; 31% of Westerners take this precaution.

Impact of Race, Gender, Income and Employment Status on Selected Precautions

Precautions Taken	Income			Employment Status	
	Under $11,000	$11,000 to $25,999	$26,000 or Over	Working Full-Time	Working Part-Time, Retired, Keeping House, Unemployed
	%	%	%	%	%
Getting someone to go with you when going out after dark	48	31	16	23	49
	Gamma .43			Gamma .53	

Impact of Race, Gender, Income and Employment Status on Selected Precautions

(Continued)

Dressing plainly to avoid drawing attention	74	56	52	53	70
	Gamma .29			Gamma .34	
Keeping car doors locked to keep intruders out	76	68	71	67	76
	Gamma .10			Gamma .21	
Planning one's route to avoid potentially dangerous places	57	49	39	47	53
	Gamma .21			Gamma .12	
Telephoning a friend or relative to say one has arrived home safely	71	57	54	53	70
	Gamma .23			Gamma .34	
Having extra locks on doors at home	52	47	51	51	50
	Gamma .03			Gamma .01	

Precautions Taken	**Race**		**Gender**	
	White	Black	Male	Female
	%	%	%	%
Getting someone to go with you when going out after dark	32	48	15	54
	Gamma .32		Gamma .73	
Dressing plainly to avoid drawing attention	58	78	53	69
	Gamma .44		Gamma .32	
Keeping car doors locked to keep intruders out	86	69	59	83
	Gamma .46		Gamma .54	
Planning one's route to avoid potentially dangerous places	47	64	40	58
	Gamma .33		Gamma .35	
Telephoning a friend or relative to say one has arrived home safely	59	70	51	70
	Gamma .23		Gamma .39	
Having extra locks on doors at home	49	61	51	52
	Gamma .25		Gamma .02	

Impact of Geographical Location on Major Precautions Affected by Fear

Those Who Take The Following Precautions When Going Out After Dark	East	West	Midwest	South
	%	%	%	%
Do you get someone to go with you because of crime?	33	31	33	41
	Gamma .11			
Do you plan your route to avoid potentially dangerous places?	50	46	46	55
	Gamma .09			
When riding or sitting in a car do you keep the car doors locked to keep intruders out?	70	70	69	76
	Gamma .07			
Do you dress plainly to avoid drawing attention?	62	53	57	70
	Gamma .12			
Do you telephone back to a friend or relative to say you've arrived safe at home?	60	61	57	65
	Gamma .05			
Do you have extra locks on your doors at home?	54	48	50	53
	Gamma .01			

Why People Take Precautions

The present study shows that levels of fear have a major affect on whether or not people take precautions and on the nature of the precautions they take. Our analysis also demonstrates how the four factors we have introduced - victimization, isolation, information exposure and social disadvantage - relate to the taking of protective measures.

Ties to Concrete Fear and Formless Fear

Our analysis thus far has emphasized the importance of distinguishing between two types of fear which we have identified as concrete fear and formless fear. In the case of precautions, we find, however, that those who exhibit high amounts of either type of fear are more likely to take precautions than those with low levels of fear.

As can be seen from the following table, fear clearly motivates people to take precautions. But with few exceptions, the table demonstrates that both types of fear induce people to take precautions equally. Almost equal proportions of the fearful, whether they exhibit high levels of concrete fear or formless fear, take the listed precautions.

The influence of fear shows up most strikingly in relation to precautions taken outside the home. Six out of ten people with high levels of formless fear, for example, ask a companion to go with them after dark, compared with only two out of ten people who are less fearful. Seven out of ten with high levels of formless fear plan their routes to avoid potentially dangerous places, whereas only four out of ten with moderate or low fear do so. Almost eight out of ten of those who have a high level of formless fear dress plainly to avoid drawing attention, while five out of ten with lower levels of fear do so. High levels of fear also affect whether or not people lock their car doors, or whether they call friends or relatives to say they have arrived safely at home.

Only one item which measures precautions taken to protect the home - having extra locks on the doors - seems to be much affected by levels of fear. About six out of ten with high levels of formless fear take this precaution, compared with four out of ten with low fear. The other home-related protective measures do not seem much influenced by levels of fear.

Why is it that fear seems a much more powerful factor in motivating the taking of precautions outside, rather than inside, the home?

It can be implied from the overwhelming majority of people who take precautions, such as locking the doors of their homes and cars, and always identifying people before letting them in, that many home-protective measures seem to be viewed as "routine." They are probably "security rituals," carried out without much thought and therefore, without much conscious connection to fear. But these precautions may tell us much about our society just by virtue of their absorption into our everyday culture. The fact that nearly nine out of ten Americans always identify people before opening their homes to them suggests that there is a "presumed level" of fear and suspicion that might not exist in a more cohesive society.

Impact of Two Types of Fear on Precautions

	Level of Formless Fear		Level of Concrete Fear	
Those who take the following precautions most of the time	High Fear	Moderate to Low Fear	High Fear	Moderate to Low Fear
Precautions when going out	%	%	%	%
When you go out after dark, do you get someone to go with you because of crime?	63	20	48	26
	Gamma .68		Gamma .40	
Do you plan your route to avoid potentially dangerous places?	71	37	70	35
	Gamma .56		Gamma .56	
When riding or sitting in a car do you keep the car doors locked to keep intruders out?	84	64	83	63
	Gamma .45		Gamma .40	

Impact of Two Types of Fear on Precautions
(Continued)

Those who take the following precautions most of the time	Level of Formless Fear High Fear	 Moderate to Low Fear	Level of Concrete Fear High Fear	 Moderate to Low Fear
Do you dress plainly to avoid drawing attention?	77	52	74	52
	Gamma .46		Gamma .37	
Do you telephone back to a friend or relative to say you've arrived safe at home?	72	54	70	55
	Gamma .30		Gamma .30	
Do you take something with you at night that could be used for protection — like a dog, whistle, knife or gun?	33	23	33	22
	Gamma .22		Gamma .27	
Precautions when going away for the weekend:	%	%	%	%
Do you stop delivery of newspapers or mail or have someone bring them in?	69	70	73	66
	Gamma .05		Gamma .12	
Do you have someone watch your home?	86	79	87	78
	Gamma .19		Gamma .27	
Do you set an automatic timer to switch on and off lights?	26	25	27	24
	Gamma .06		Gamma .11	
Protecting Homes:				
Having extra locks on your doors?	62	44	28	26
	Gamma .30		Gamma .22	
Engraving your valuables with some sort of identification?	37	35	38	35
	Gamma .04		Gamma .17	
Always keeping the doors locked when you go out?	92	84	91	84
	Gamma .36		Gamma .32	
Always identifying people before letting them in?	91	83	90	84
	Gamma .38		Gamma .20	
Having bars on some of your windows?	11	5	10	6
	Gamma .27		Gamma .21	
Having a burglar alarm?	18	14	17	14
	Gamma .15		Gamma .09	

Precautions and Four Explanations of Fear

Of the four major clusters of explanatory factors which have been used in this report - victimization, disadvantage, isolation and information exposure - victimization can be regarded as the most powerful in explaining why some people take more precautions than others.

Groups identified as highly victimized - women, blacks, and residents of large cities - are among those most likely to take precautions. Of these groups, women and blacks pay the most attention to protective measures. Also, as common sense would predict, people who have themselves been victims of a burglary are more likely to take precautions than those who have not. Revealingly, we find that youth, a heavily victimized group, does not tend to take more precautions than the middle-aged or the old. (A notable exception to this, as will be shown in the next section, is the greater incidence of gun ownership among the young).

Among the socially disadvantaged, those with low incomes are the most likely to take precautions. Levels of education and occupational status do not function as predictors of precaution taking.

Among those who are isolated, not working full time is the key factor contributing to the taking of more protective measures. It appears that whether one is married, single, or previously married, has little impact on the likelihood of taking precautions.

Information exposure is important in predicting precautionary behavior in that people who say they know victims of robbery are likely to take more precautions than those who do not.

Explanatory Factors Associated with Precautions

Importance	**Explanatory Categories**			
	Victimization	Social Disadvantage	Isolation	Information Access
Very Important	○ Female ○ Race (Black)	○ Low Income	○ Not Working Full-Time	○ Knowing A Robbery Victim
Somewhat Important	○ Large City Resident ○ Having Been A Burglary Victim	○ Low Level of Education	○ Marital Loss (Divorced, Separated, Widowed)	○ Seeing Violent Material on Television
Unimportant	○ Age (Youth)	○ Occupational Status		○ Reading Reports on Violence in Newspapers

Gun Ownership

In recent years, the control of firearms, especially hand guns, has become a hotly debated issue. Yet, our study reveals that gun ownership is very common indeed. A majority of Americans (52%) say there is a gun in their household.

Coping With Fear

In addition to revealing this wide proliferation of guns in households across the nation, the data offer some fascinating insights into patterns of gun ownership. These patterns may reflect unique regional, historical and cultural influences that make gun ownership a phenomenon quite distinct from the precautionary measures discussed in the preceding section.

Do you own a gun to protect your home?

	%
Yes	52
No	48
(Number of Respondents)	(1043)

1. Who Are the Gun Owners?

People living outside large cities - particularly those living in rural areas - are the most likely to own guns. The present survey finds that 62% of rural households have guns, compared with only 42% of households in the large metropolitan areas. Fifty-four percent (54%) of small-city residents have guns, as do 51% of surburbanites. This is a striking finding, if for no other reason than given the high levels of fear in the cities, one would assume a greater percentage of gun ownership.

People living in the South are the most likely to own guns; people in the East are least likely to have them. Gun ownership is concentrated substantially in the South. Seven out of ten (69%) respondents living in the South have guns in their households. This contrasts dramatically with incidence of ownership in the East, where fewer than one out of three respondents (31%) own guns. About half the respondents in the West (51%) and Midwest (52%) own guns.

Married people are much more likely to own guns than single or previously married individuals (the widowed, separated, or divorced). Sixty percent (60%) of married respondents report having guns, compared with 45% of single people and 36% of those previously-married.

Males are also more likely to say they have a gun in their household than are females (59% of males, 45% of females). One notable contrast to this finding is that divorced, separated or widowed women are far more likely to own guns than previously married men. Sixty-eight percent (68%) of previously married women own guns, compared with 32% of previously married men.

The middle-aged and young tend to own guns more than do the old. Fifty percent (50%) of respondents under 50 years of age have household guns, whereas only 45% of those over fifty have them.

Blacks (58%) somewhat more often have a gun in their household than do whites (51%).

Those who see frequent reports about crime in the newspaper and on TV are somewhat more likely to be gun owners than those who do not. Fifty-five percent (55%) of those who say they see crime reports daily on TV own guns, compared with 45% of those who see such reports less frequently. Similarly, 54% of those who read crime-related articles daily in the newspaper have household guns, as do 48% of those who read such articles less frequently.

Impact of Place of Residence on Gun Ownership

Gun Ownership	Place Of Residence			
	Rural	Suburb	Small City	Large City
	%	%	%	%
Yes	62	51	54	42
No	38	49	46	58
(Number of Respondents)	(200)	(232)	(370)	(217)
% of Total Sample	20	23	36	21

Gamma .17

Impact of Region on Gun Ownership

Gun Ownership	Region			
	East	West	Midwest	South
	%	%	%	%
Yes	31	51	52	69
No	69	49	48	31
(Number of Respondents)	(238)	(207)	(259)	(323)
% of Total Sample	23	20	25	32
Gamma .39				

Impact of Marital Status on Gun Ownership

Gun Ownership	Marital Status		
	Married	Single	Divorced, Widowed, Separated
	%	%	%
Yes	60	45	35
No	40	55	65
(Number of Respondents)	(635)	(184)	(212)
% of Total Sample	62	18	20
Gamma .13			

Impact of Gender on Gun Ownership

Gun Ownership	Gender	
	Man	Woman
	%	%
Yes	59	45
No	41	55
(Number of Respondents)	(489)	(541)
% of Total Sample	48	52
Gamma .28		

Impact of Marital Status of Men and Women on Gun Ownership

Gun Owners	Marital Status		
	Married	Single	Divorced, Separated, Widowed
	%	%	%
Women	46	25	68
Men	54	75	32
(Number of Respondents)	(375)	(82)	(75)
% of Total Sample	71	15	14
Gamma .46			

Impact of Age on Gun Ownership

Gun Ownership	Age				
	18-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60 and Over
	%	%	%	%	%
Yes	58	60	52	53	39
No	42	40	48	47	61
(Number of Respondents)	(283)	(190)	(158)	(158)	(236)
% of Total Sample	28	18	15	15	24
Gamma .19					

Impact of Race on Gun Ownership

Gun Ownership	Race	
	White	Black
	%	%
Yes	51	58
No	49	42
(Number of Respondents)	(857)	(168)
% of Total Sample	84	16
Gamma .13		

Impact of Exposure to Crime Reports on Television News on Gun Ownership

Gun Ownership	Seeing Violent Crime News On Television	
	Less Than Daily	Daily
	%	%
Yes	45	55
No	55	45
(Number of Respondents)	(291)	(741)
% of Total Sample	28	72
Gamma .19		

Impact of Exposure to Crime Reports in Newspapers on Gun Ownership

Gun Ownership	Reading Violent Crime News	
	Less Than Daily	Daily
	%	%
Yes	48	54
No	52	46
(Number of Respondents)	(413)	(626)
% of Total Sample	40	60
Gamma .13		

2. The Reasons Behind Gun Ownership

The pattern of gun ownership described above suggests that there are cultural and historical motivations which go beyond the factors which we have related to concrete and formless fear: belonging to a highly victimized group, exposure to information, isolation and social disadvantage. Before offering a cultural perspective on gun ownership, however, we will discuss how ownership relates to the fears and fear factors that we have described.

Links To Formless Fear

Our data show that gun ownership is associated more strongly with formless fear than with concrete fear. We find that those who own guns tend to have reduced levels of formless fear: 70% of gun owners have low levels of formless fear, compared with 30% of gun owners who have high levels of fear (a difference of 40% between the two groups). The impact on levels of fear is not as distinct in the case of concrete fear: 62% of gun owners exhibit low levels of concrete fear, while 38% show high levels of fear (a difference of 24% between the two groups). Thus, gun ownership appears to have a notable affect in reducing the undefined fear and little affect in reducing fears of specific violent acts.

This may be explained partially by many respondents answering the question for the household and not for themselves: the gun is not so much theirs as it is a protective device for the home; furthermore, it is not thought of as a defense against a specific act of violent crime. Beyond this, it stands to reason that most people keep their guns at home rather than going about armed. Therefore, the gun is not thought of in the context of personal protection against violent crimes that could occur outside the home or outside the community.

This concept of the gun as a household protective device rather than a personal armament is supported by the finding that married people are far more likely to have guns than either single or previously married people. The married may have a greater sense of responsibility for another person or for a household than do the single and previously married, who may in many instances live alone.

Impact of Gun Ownership on Concrete Fear

Concrete Fear	Gun Ownership	
	Yes	No
	%	%
High	38	44
Moderate To Low	62	56
(Number of Respondents)	(539)	(501)
% of Total Sample	52	48
Gamma .11		

The Impact of Gun Ownership on Formless Fear

Formless Fear	Gun Ownership	
	Yes	No
	%	%
High	30	44
Moderate To Low	70	56
(Number of Respondents)	(539)	(501)
% of Total Sample	52	48
Gamma .28		

Victimization

Patterns of gun ownership do indeed correspond to some traditional measures of victimization. The young and the black, as the data have shown, are among the groups most likely to possess guns. Actual rates of victimization, however, do little to explain why fewer females have guns than males, and why gun ownership is less common in the cities than in the countryside.

Information Exposure

The survey does indicate that exposure to both TV and newspaper reports about crime increases the likelihood of gun ownership. We do not find, however, that more formal education, which is associated with greater access to information, correlates substantially with increased gun ownership.

Gun Ownership	**Education**		
	Some High School Or Less	High School Graduate Or Some College	College Graduate
	%	%	%
Yes	51	57	47
No	49	43	53
(Number of Respondents)	(352)	(367)	(309)
% of Total Sample	34	36	30
Gamma .05			

Coping With Fear

Isolation

Isolation does not appear to be strongly related to owning a gun. If anything, responsibility for another person, as in marriage, is associated with gun ownership. The notable exception to this occurs in the case of previously married women, who, as we have stated, are far more likely to own guns than previously married men. Among two other isolated groups - the old and those not employed full time - there is no correlation with gun ownership. We find that the young are more likely to own guns than the old, and that fully-employed people are about equally likely to have guns than those who do not work full time.

Impact of Employment Status on Gun Ownership

Gun Ownership	Employment Status	
	Full-Time	Less Than Full-Time
	%	%
Yes	51	50
No	49	50
(Number of Respondents)	(514)	(489)
% of Total Sample	51	49

Gamma .01

Disadvantage

In spite of the finding that the disadvantaged manifest more formless fear than the affluent, the survey discovered that advantaged individuals tend to be somewhat more likely than the disadvantaged to own guns. The data disclose, for example, that only 41% of those with incomes under $11,000 own guns, whereas 59% of those with incomes $11,000 to $26,000 possess them. But while income levels predict to some extent gun ownership by the advantaged, levels of education do not: 51% of those with less than a high school education have guns, compared with 47% of those who have a college education.

Impact of Income on Gun Ownership

Gun Ownership	**Income**		
	Under $11,000	$11,000 to $25,999	$26,000 or Over
	%	%	%
Yes	41	59	56
No	59	41	44
(Number of Respondents)	(302)	(423)	(190)
% of Total Sample	33	46	21
Gamma .21			

A Cultural/Historical Perspective

The factors which can be used to predict levels of fear by various groups are not as useful in predicting rates of gun ownership. A further explanation, which rests on the cultural and historical orientation of the American people, is perhaps more helpful.

The survey shows that males living outside the large cities are most likely to have guns, and this appears consistent with the cultural role expectation that the males in society function as protectors. This is especially true for males in rural areas, who are traditionally portrayed as defenders of the family.

We find also that gun ownership is concentrated in the South, to a lesser extent in the West and Midwest, and to a far lesser extent in the East. These regional differences indicate that reasons having to do with historical development should be sought. The tradition of gun ownership may be prevalent in the South, West and Midwest for a range of historical reasons. In the South, perhaps this pattern of ownership relates to the South's experience as an occupied region after the Civil War, or it could have something to do with the social and economic system of plantations and slave owning that existed prior to the Civil War. In the West and Midwest, gun ownership may be linked to the frontier ethic and tradition. In the East, a tradition of gun ownership has apparently not been firmly established.

Impact of Place of Residence on Gun Ownership for Males

Gun Ownership Among Males	Place Of Residence			
	Rural	Suburb	Small City	Large City
	%	%	%	%
Yes	67	63	61	47
No	33	37	39	53
(Number of Respondents)	(93)	(123)	(162)	(107)
% of Total Sample	19	25	33	23

Gamma .20

3. The Effects of Gun Ownership on Reducing Fear

We have learned that owning a gun is associated with a reduction of formless fear. Yet one surprising discovery is that owning a gun does not reduce formless fear of crime as substantially for those living in large cities, as it does for people who live elsewhere. We know that large cities exhibit higher levels of crime than other places of residence in this country and we have discovered that people in large cities are more fearful than people outside them. Why does gun ownership fail to substantially reduce fear for urban residents?

Two plausible reasons can be suggested. First, although rural areas, suburbs, and small cities cannot be considered havens from crime or fear of crime, it is possible that residents of those areas believe their problems are of manageable proportions. In contrast with city dwellers, who may be disillusioned about the capacity of individuals to make much difference in a city of millions of people, Americans who live outside the great metropolitan centers may be far more likely to believe that individual effort can produce results and can prevail over difficult obstacles.

The survey also shows that blacks and youth who own guns are less fearful than those without guns. For men, owning a gun has a striking relationship to level of fear, however, this relationship does not hold true for women.

Impact of Gun Ownership on Formless Fear

1. Large Cities	**Gun Ownership**	
Formless Fear	Yes	No
	%	%
High Fear	49	58
Moderate to Low Fear	51	42
(Number of Respondents)	(92)	(126)
% of Total Sample	42	58
Gamma .08		

2. Suburbs	**Gun Ownership**	
Formless Fear	Yes	No
	%	%
High Fear	24	36
Moderate to Low Fear	76	64
(Number of Respondents)	(119)	(113)
% of Total Sample	51	49
Gamma .19		

Impact of Gun Ownership on Formless Fear

3. Small Cities	**Gun Ownership**	
Formless Fear	Yes	No
	%	%
High Fear	28	37
Moderate to Low Fear	72	63
(Number of Respondents)	(199)	(171)
% of Total Sample	54	46
Gamma .17		

4. Rural Areas	**Gun Ownership**	
Formless Fear	Yes	No
	%	%
High Fear	28	36
Moderate to Low Fear	72	64
(Number of Respondents)	(124)	(76)
% of Total Sample	62	38
Gamma .19		

Impact of Gun Ownership on Formless Fear for Blacks

Formless Fear	**Gun Ownership**	
	Yes	No
	%	%
High Fear	41	53
Moderate to Low Fear	59	47
(Number of Respondents)	(97)	(71)
% of Total Sample	58	42
Gamma .14		

Impact of Gun Ownership on Formless Fear for Youth

Formless Fear	**Gun Ownership**	
	Yes	No
	%	%
High Fear	34	38
Moderate to Low Fear	66	62
(Number of Respondents)	(163)	(120)
% of Total Sample	58	42
Gamma .14		

Impact of Gun Ownership on Formless Fear for Women

Formless Fear	Gun Ownership	
	Yes	No
	%	%
High Fear	45	50
Moderate to Low Fear	55	50
(Number of Respondents)	(244)	(298)
% of Total Sample	45	55
Gamma .10		

The Impact of Gun Ownership on Formless Fear for Men

Formless Fear	Gun Ownership	
	Yes	No
	%	%
High	19	35
Moderate To Low	81	65
(Number of Respondents)	(290)	(199)
% of Total Sample	59	41
Gamma .38		

Summary

Fear has a striking influence on the taking of precautions outside the home. Precautionary measures inside the home appear to be taken as part of routine existence in our culture and may be related to a "presumed level" of fear in our society.

Whether or not one makes the effort to take the security precautions detailed in the latter part of this chapter is clearly related to suffering in the present: the victimization suffered by blacks, women; the disadvantage of low income; the isolation of not working at a full-time job. Regional, cultural and historical differences appear to relate to gun ownership in a way that makes possession of a gun a rather unique precautionary measure. These factors make the phenomenon of gun ownership distinct from other precautionary measures.

Chapter Four
Police and the Criminal Justice System

Police and the Criminal Justice System

A Question of Confidence

The preceding chapters have examined the fears of the American public concerning specific and non-specific threats of crime and enumerated the precautions that are taken as a means of countering these fears.

The present chapter investigates American attitudes toward the police, the criminal justice system, and a range of possible punitive measures. It describes the striking differences between levels of confidence exhibited toward the police and those exhibited toward the courts.

Positive Attitudes Toward the Local Police

In the late 1960's and early '70's, it appeared the police were viewed by many people as being brutal and impersonal. Today, however, citizens across the United States manifest extremely positive attitudes toward the local police. Nearly nine in ten (89%) say their local police are respectful and that they do not use too much force. A similar majority (85%) disagree with the statement that the local police just enjoy pushing people around and giving them a hard time. About three-fourths (76%) say that the local police treat people of all races the same. A similar percentage (73%) say that local police do not spend most of their time going after people who do little things wrong and ignore most of the bad things going on. Regarding police honesty, about four-fifths (81%) say that their local police are about as honest as most people; 14% say they are more honest; and only 5% say that police are less honest than most people. Sixty-three percent (63%) feel the police should be given more power to question people.

Positive Attitudes Toward the Local Police

	Respectful	Arrogant	
	%	%	
Which of the following best describes your local police officers?	89	11	
	Yes	No	
	%	%	
Do the police use too much force?	12	88	
	Agree	Disagree	
	%	%	
The local police just enjoy pushing people around and giving them a hard time.	15	85	
The local police treat people of all races the same.	76	24	
The local police spend most of their time going after people who do little things wrong and ignore most of the bad things going on.	27	73	
	More Honest Than Most People	About The Same As Most People	Less Honest Than Most People
	%	%	%
Which of the following best describes your local police officers?	14	81	5
	Favor	Oppose	Don't Know
	%	%	%
Do you favor or oppose giving the police more power to question people?	63	33	4

Police and the Criminal Justice System

The Index of Police Confidence

In order to establish a measure of which groups in our society have the most confidence in the police and which the least, responses to several questions were combined into a single index.

This index includes the following items:

- In general, would you rate your local police department as excellent, good, fair or poor?
- Which of the following best describes your local police officers? Are they arrogant, respectful?
- Do the police use too much force?
- Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? The local police treat people of all races the same.
- Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? The local police just enjoy pushing people around and giving them a hard time.
- Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? The local police spend most of their time going after people who do little things wrong and ignore most of the bad things going on.

From the accompanying table, it can be seen that 84% of Americans show high levels of confidence in the police, while 16% show low confidence.

Confidence in the Police

	%
High	84
Low	16
(Number of Respondents)	(970)

Who Distrusts the Police?

This study found that people who have a high level of formless fear in their communities are likely to view their local police with low confidence in greater numbers (50%) than those with a low level of formless fear (38%). The data show that whether or not someone has confidence in the police is little affected by whether or not someone has high or low concrete fear.

Beyond this, the survey reveals that certain groups demonstrate particularly low levels of confidence in the police.

Impact of Formless Fear on Confidence in Police

Confidence in Police	Formless Fear Moderate to Low %	Formless Fear High %
High	62	50
Low	38	50
(Number of Respondents)	(660)	(387)
% of Total Sample	63	37
Gamma .12		

Impact of Concrete Fear on Confidence in Police

Confidence in Police	Concrete Fear Moderate to Low %	Concrete Fear High %
High	85	82
Low	15	18
(Number of Respondents)	(620)	(426)
% of Total Sample	59	41
Gamma .10		

Those who have been crime victims show lower levels of confidence towards their local police than those who have not been victims. Nearly a third (31%) of burglary victims have low confidence in police, compared with 15% of non-victims. One would expect to find lower levels of trust among victims of armed robbery. However, only a small percentage of respondents have been robbed, precluding a statistically valid conclusion based on our data. People under 50 demonstrate remarkably less confidence in the police than those over 50. Twenty-two percent (22%) of people between the ages of 18 to 29 have negative attitudes towards the police, compared with 21% of people in their 30's; 21% in their 40's; 9% of people in their 50's; and 7% of those 60 and over.

Blacks have a somewhat lower level of trust in the police than do whites. Twenty-three percent (23%) of blacks express a low degree of confidence in the police, compared with 15% of whites.

Impact of Being Burglarized on Confidence in Police

Confidence In Police	Burglary	
	Yes	No
	%	%
High	69	85
Low	31	15
(Number of Respondents)	(106)	(932)
% of Total Sample	11	89
Gamma .42		

Impact of Age on Confidence in Police

Confidence in Police	Age				
	18-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-64
	%	%	%	%	%
High	78	79	79	91	93
Low	22	21	21	9	7
(Number of Respondents)	(283)	(191)	(160)	(158)	(236)
% of Total Sample	28	18	16	15	23
Gamma .32					

Impact of Race on Confidence in Local Police

Confidence In Local Police	Race	
	White	Black
	%	%
High	85	77
Low	15	23
(Number of Respondents)	(860)	(118)
% of Total Sample	88	12
Gamma .14		

Those Who Know Crime Victims

Twenty percent (20%) who know a burglary victim, and a similar percentage (23%) who know an armed robbery victim, have low confidence in their local police, compared with 13% who do not know a victim of burglary and 15% who do not know a victim of robbery. These people who have experienced the intrusion of crime into their personal lives suffer a loss of confidence in the local police officer -- the traditional representation of community law and order. As the personification of protection at the local level, the police officer becomes the scapegoat for people's increasing awareness and concern with criminal activities in their community.

Impact of Acquaintances Being Burglarized on Confidence in Police

Confidence In Police	Burglary	
	Yes %	No %
High	80	87
Low	20	13
(Number of Respondents)	(520)	(522)
% of Total Sample	50	50
Gamma .24		

Impact of Acquaintances Being Victims of Armed Robbery on Confidence in Police

Confidence In Police	Armed Robbery	
	Yes %	No %
High	77	85
Low	23	15
(Number of Respondents)	(209)	(834)
% of Total Sample	20	80
Gamma .25		

People who perceive their neighborhoods as disintegrating express a somewhat lower degree of confidence in police. We have already seen that people who say that their neighborhoods have become unsafe show relatively high levels of fear. One-fifth (21%) of those who say that crime is average or above in their neighborhood have low confidence in the police, while 15% who say that crime in their neighborhood is below average have low levels of confidence in their local police. It is logical that those who believe that the crime situation in their neighborhood is deteriorating and perceive their communities as unstable have the lower levels of confidence in their local police. Conversely, in areas where there are high levels of neighborhood cohesion, people express higher levels of confidence in local police.

Impact of Perceived Neighborhood Crime Trends on Confidence in Police

Confidence In Police	**Perceived Neighborhood Crime Trends**	
	Increasing	Decreasing Or Remaining The Same
	%	%
High	78	85
Low	22	15
(Number of Respondents)	(213)	(796)
% of Total Sample	21	79
Gamma .24		

Impact of Perceived Neighborhood Crime on Confidence in Police

Confidence In Police	**Perceived Neighborhood Crime**	
	Average Or More	Less Than Average
	%	%
High	79	85
Low	21	15
(Number of Respondents)	(216)	(819)
% of Total Sample	21	79
Gamma .19		

Police and the Criminal Justice System

Tax Support for Increasing Police Protection

Americans are astonishingly supportive of increased taxes to provide more police protection. The survey shows that about half (51%) of Americans favor the raising of taxes by their local governments in order to provide greater police protection. This is a remarkably large segment of the population, considering that popular sentiment has favored in recent years a reduction in both government and taxes, as evidenced by the "tax revolt" initiated by California's Proposition 13.

What is more, the support for greater police protection by means of increased taxes cuts across most demographic boundaries: the young and the old support it in equal numbers, as do blacks and whites, those in large cities and those in rural areas. The only clear demographic distinction is that more women (57%) favor increased taxes than do men (44%).

There are several non-demographic factors which predict support for more taxes to provide more police protection. One factor which has a substantial influence is fear of crime. Sixty-percent (60%) of those with high levels of concrete fear support increased taxes, while 44% with lower levels of fear support them. Similarly, 59% of those with high levels of formless fear favor increased taxes, compared with 46% of those who are less fearful.

People who feel they are living in deteriorating neighborhoods are also likely to evince strong support for increased taxes to augment police protection. Sixty-two percent (62%) of people who say they have restricted their travel within their neighborhoods because of fear of crime favor such taxes; only 47% of those who have not restricted their travel favor the tax increase. There is a parallel pattern in the following findings: 59% of people who say their neighborhoods have an average or greater incidence of crime support the taxes, compared to 49% who feel the incidence of crime in their neighborhood is below average; 57% of individuals who feel that crime in their neighborhood is increasing favor the taxes, compared with 49% who say that crime is staying the same or decreasing; 54% of those who feel that "most" of their neighbors are law-abiding support tax increases, as do 49% of those who feel "all" of their neighbors are law-abiding.

There is also significantly greater support for increased taxes among people who read about violent crime daily in newspapers than among people who read reports of these crimes less frequently. Fifty-six percent (56%) of those who read about violent crime daily support the tax hike; 42% of those who read about violent crime less often support it. Television viewing has a less dramatic, though corresponding, effect: 53% of those seeing violent crime news on television daily favor increased taxes, compared with 46% of people who see such reports less frequently.

Would You Be in Favor of Your Local Government Raising Taxes in Order to Provide More Police Protection?

	%
Yes	51%
No	49%
(Number of Respondents)	(1008)

Impact of Gender on Supporting Increased Taxes for Police Protection

Support Increased Taxes For Police Protection	Gender	
	Male	Female
	%	%
Support	44	57
Non-Support	56	43
(Number of Respondents)	(479)	(519)
% of Total Sample	48	52
Gamma .26		

Impact of Concrete Fear on Supporting Increased Taxes for Police Protection

Support Increased Taxes For Police Protection	Concrete Fear	
	Moderate to Low	High
	%	%
Support	44	60
Non-Support	56	40
(Number of Respondents)	(600)	(408)
% of Total Sample	60	40
Gamma .30		

Impact of Formless Fear on Supporting Increased Taxes for Police Protection

Support Increased Taxes For Police Protection	Formless Fear	
	Moderate to Low	High
	%	%
Support	46	59
Non-Support	54	41
(Number of Respondents)	(638)	(370)
% of Total Sample	63	37
Gamma .25		

Impact of Restricting Neighborhood Travel on Supporting Increased Taxes for Police Protection

Support Increased Taxes For Police Protection	Restricting Travel to Parts of Neighborhood	
	Yes	No
	%	%
Support	62	47
Non-Support	38	53
(Number of Respondents)	(238)	(755)
% of Total Sample	24	76

Gamma .29

Impact of Perceived Neighborhood Crime on Supporting Increased Taxes for Police Protection

Support Increased Taxes For Police Protection	Perceived Neighborhood Crime	
	Less than Average	Average or More
	%	%
Support	49	59
Non-Support	51	41
(Number of Respondents)	(788)	(209)
% of Total Sample	79	21

Gamma .20

Impact of Perceived Neighborhood Crime Trends on Supporting Increased Taxes for Police Protection

Support Increased Taxes For Police Protection	Perceived Neighborhood Crime Trends	
	Crime Increase	Crime Staying the Same or Decreasing
	%	%
Support	57	49
Non-Support	43	51
(Number of Respondents)	(208)	(768)
% of Total Sample	21	79

Gamma .16

Impact of Perception of Neighbors on Supporting Increased Taxes for Police Protection

Support Increased Taxes For Police Protection	Perception of Neighbors	
	All Are Law-Abiding	Most Are Law-Abiding
	%	%
Support	49	54
Non-Support	51	46
(Number of Respondents)	(678)	(326)
% of Total Sample	68	32
Gamma .11		

Impact of Frequency of Reading About Violent Crime in Newspapers on Supporting Increased Taxes for Police Protection

Support Increased Taxes For Police Protection	Reading About Violent Crime In Newspapers	
	Less Than Daily	Daily
	%	%
Support	42	56
Non-Support	58	44
(Number of Respondents)	(402)	(605)
% of Total Sample	40	60
Gamma .28		

Impact of Seeing Violent Crime News on Television on Supporting Increased Taxes for Police Protection

Support Increased Taxes For Police Protection	Seeing Violent Crime News On Television	
	Less Than Daily	Daily
	%	%
Support	46	53
Non-Support	54	47
(Number of Respondents)	(278)	(722)
% of Total Sample	28	72
Gamma .14		

Critical Attitudes Toward the Courts

The previous section has described the predominately positive attitude held by Americans toward the police. This positive attitude, unfortunately, is not echoed in American sentiment toward the criminal justice system.

Eight out of every ten Americans feel that the American judicial system is not effective in rehabilitating criminals or in helping them return to society as law-abiding citizens. In addition, more than half of all Americans feel that present prison sentencing does not serve as a deterrent to crime. Overwhelming majorities believe that we can neither help those who commit crimes nor control criminal activity through our present judiciary structure. By contrast, a clear majority of Americans (66%) do feel that the death penalty would be an effective deterrent to the crime of murder.

A Punitive Public

The vast majority of respondents, when questioned on possible solutions to the crime control and rehabilitation problem, feel that increasingly harsh, punitive measures were necessary. Roughly nine out of ten people agree that mandatory prison sentences should be imposed on criminals convicted of violent crimes. Similarly, 86% feel that those who have been found guilty of violent crimes should receive long sentences. Two out of three Americans favor the death penalty for those who have been convicted of murder. Finally, almost one in two Americans support the sterilization of habitual criminals and the insane.

Police and the Criminal Justice System

In keeping with the consensus that we need to take stronger punitive measures to meet perceived deficiencies in the administration of justice, very small numbers of people believe that the current system is overly harsh. Only 3% of respondents consider the courts in their area too harsh, while only about one in ten (12%) believe that the police are guilty of using too much force.

Across a broad range of policies, public opinion on a continuum of lenient to harsh administration of judicial procedures is consistently clustered toward the punitive end of the scale.

Do You Favor or Oppose the Following Policies?

	Favor %	Oppose %	Don't Know %
Mandatory prison sentences for people convicted of violent crime	89	7	4
Long prison sentences for people found guilty of violent crime	86	8	6
The death penalty for persons convicted of murder	66	26	8
Sterilization of habitual criminals and the hopelessly insane	45	43	12
	Effective %	Not Effective %	
How effective are most prisons in rehabilitating criminals and helping their return to society as law-abiding citizens?	20	80	
	Yes %	No %	Don't Know %
Do prison sentences discourage crime?	48	52	
Does the death penalty discourage murder?	66	34	
Are the courts in your area too harsh?	3	95	2
Do the police use too much force?	12	87	1

Who Favors Punitive Measures?

Our analysis reveals that support for specific punitive measures exists irrespective of levels of either concrete or formless fear. With regard to both types of fear, almost equal numbers of the fearful and non-fearful favor the death penalty and long prison sentences. The fearless are no more likely than the fearful to believe that long prison sentences discourage crime.[1]

Impact of Concrete Fear on Attitudes Toward the Death Penalty

Death Penalty	**Concrete Fear** Moderate to Low Fear	High Fear
	%	%
Favor	74	70
Oppose	26	30
(Number of Respondents)	(548)	(368)
% of Total Sample	60	40
Gamma .06		

Impact of Formless Fear on Attitudes Toward the Death Penalty

Death Penalty	**Formless Fear** Moderate to Low Fear	High Fear
	%	%
Favor	71	74
Oppose	29	26
(Number of Respondents)	(585)	(331)
% of Total Sample	64	36
Gamma .04		

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[1] One exception to the pattern is that those who exhibit high levels of concrete fear are more likely to favor sterilization for habitual criminals and the insane than those with high levels of formless fear.

Attitudes Toward the Death Penalty

The death penalty has been a source of much controversy in recent years. Since it is the most drastic of punitive measures, it is revealing to examine the support for the death penalty and the sources for this support.

As stated, two thirds of all Americans (66%) voice support for the death penalty. An equal number (66%) feel that the death penalty does serve as a deterrent to murder. Beyond this, certain demographic groups exhibit higher degrees of support for the penalty than do others.

The old favor the death penalty more strongly than do the young. Seventy-six percent (76%) of Americans over 60 favor the death penalty, compared with 67% of those ages 18 to 29.

Married and previously married people support the penalty in greater numbers than single people. Seventy-four percent (74%) of the married, 73% of the previously married and 63% of singles say they favor the death sentence.

Whites are more likely to favor the death penalty than blacks; 73% of whites support it, compared with 64% of blacks.

Males (76%) are more likely to say they support the death penalty than are females (68%).

It should be noted that none of the demographic distinctions are striking: all differences tend to be a matter of about ten percentage points. Support for the death penalty is a dominant sentiment which seems to uniformly reflect the ethos of what was once popularly called the "establishment," which is defined demographically as older, white, male and married.

Impact of Age on Attitudes Toward the Death Penalty

Attitude Toward The Death Penalty	Age				
	18-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60 or Above
	%	%	%	%	%
Favor	67	72	73	75	76
Oppose	33	28	27	25	24
(Number of Respondents)	(262)	(170)	(139)	(132)	(206)
% of Total Sample	29	19	15	14	23
Gamma .12					

Impact of Marital Status on Attitudes Toward the Death Penalty

Attitude Toward The Death Penalty	Marital Status		
	Single	Married	Divorced, Separated, Widowed
	%	%	%
Favor	63	74	73
Oppose	37	26	27
(Number of Respondents)	(167)	(570)	(174)
% of Total Sample	18	63	19
Gamma .13			

Impact of Race on Attitudes Toward the Death Penalty

Attitude Toward The Death Penalty	Race	
	White	Black
	%	%
Favor	73	64
Oppose	27	36
(Number of Respondents)	(761)	(147)
% of Total Sample	84	16
Gamma .22		

Impact of Gender on Attitudes Toward the Death Penalty

Attitude Toward The Death Penalty	Gender	
	Man	Woman
	%	%
Favor	76	68
Oppose	24	32
(Number of Respondents)	(447)	(460)
% of Total Sample	49	51
Gamma .20		

Prisons As Deterrents To Crime

Because prisons are the central means of punishment for criminal acts in our society, it is important that citizens believe they function as an effective deterrent to crime. Our study reveals, however, that over half (52%) of all Americans do not feel that prison sentences discourage crime.

Taking a closer look at which groups in society feel that prison sentences do discourage crime, a pattern similar to that described in the above section on the death penalty emerges.

We find once again that the old (55%) feel more strongly than the young (39%) that prison sentences discourage crime; the males (54%) more than the females (44%); the whites (49%) slightly more than the blacks (42%); and the married (53%) believe that prison sentences discourage crime more than do single people (41%). Previously married people (40%) side with single people in believing in lesser numbers than married people that prison sentences discourage crime.

In addition to the above groups, those with lower levels of education tend to have more faith in the efficacy of prison sentences. Those in rural areas and inhabitants of the South are more likely to believe in the value of prison sentences than people living elsewhere.

There is also a marked tendency for those who believe that the death penalty is effective as a deterrent to murder to believe that prison sentences are effective deterrents to crime. Fifty-one percent (51%) of those who consider the death penalty an effective deterrent also consider prison sentences as a sound means of deterring crime, compared with 42% of those who feel that the death penalty does not discourage murder.

What is more important to note than demographic and attitudinal differences, however, is that overall, Americans are highly doubtful that prison sentences do indeed function to discourage crime. As reported, over half (52%) of all Americans do not believe that prison sentences are a deterrent and when half the population asserts its lack of faith in the prison system, society's primary means of deterring crime, it is time to ask hard questions and devote considerable thought to the issue.

Impact of Age on Belief That Prison Discourages Crime

Believe That Prison Discourages Crime	Age				
	18-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60 and Over
	%	%	%	%	%
Yes	39	48	53	51	55
No	61	52	47	49	45
(Number of Respondents)	(283)	(183)	(156)	(141)	(219)
% of Total Sample	29	19	16	14	22
Gamma .17					

Impact of Gender on Belief That Prison Discourages Crime

Believe That Prison Discourages Crime	Gender	
	Man	Woman
	%	%
Yes	54	44
No	46	56
(Number of Respondents)	(475)	(505)
% of Total Sample	48	52
Gamma .20		

Impact of Concrete Fear on Believing Prisons Discourage Crime

Prisons Discourage Crime	Concrete Fear	
	Moderate to Low Fear	High Fear
	%	%
Yes	48	48
No	52	52
(Number of Respondents)	(578)	(411)
% of Total Sample	58	42
Gamma .00		

Impact of Formless Fear on Believing Prisons Discourage Crime

Prisons Discourage Crime	Formless Fear	
	Moderate to Low Fear	High Fear
	%	%
Yes	48	49
No	52	51
(Number of Respondents)	(622)	(366)
% of Total Sample	63	37
Gamma .05		

Impact of Concrete Fear on Opinion Regarding Sterilization of Habitual Criminals

Sterilization	Concrete Fear	
	Moderate to Low	High
	%	%
Favor	55	45
Oppose	45	55
(Number of Respondents)	(517)	(371)
% of Total Sample	58	42
Gamma .09		

Impact of Formless Fear on Opinion Regarding Sterilization of Habitual Criminals

Sterilization	Formless Fear	
	Moderate to Low	High
	%	%
Favor	46	60
Oppose	54	40
(Number of Respondents)	(567)	(321)
% of Total Sample	64	36
Gamma .23		

Impact of Race on Belief That Prison Discourages Crime

Believe That Prison Discourages Crime	Race	
	White	Black
	%	%
Yes	49	42
No	51	58
(Number of Respondents)	(820)	(159)
% of Total Sample	84	16

Gamma .13

Impact of Marital Status on Belief That Prison Discourages Crime

Believe That Prison Discourages Crime	Single	Married	Divorced, Separated, Widowed
	%	%	%
Yes	41	53	40
No	59	47	60
(Number of Respondents)	(182)	(610)	(193)
% of Total Sample	18	62	20

Gamma .02

Impact of Education on Belief That Prison Discourages Crime

Believe That Prison Discourages Crime	Education		
	Some High School Or Less	High School Graduate Or Some College	College Graduate
	%	%	%
Yes	60	44	41
No	40	56	59
(Number of Respondents)	(329)	(347)	(304)
% of Total Sample	34	35	31

Gamma .24

Impact of Place of Residence on Belief That Prison Discourages Crime

Believe That Prison Discourages Crime	Place of Residence			
	Rural	Suburb	Small City	Large City
	%	%	%	%
Yes	57	48	46	43
No	43	52	54	57
(Number of Respondents)	(186)	(219)	(361)	(208)
% of Total Sample	19	23	37	21
Gamma .14				

Impact of Geographic Location on Belief That Prison Discourages Crime

Believe That Prison Discourages Crime	Geographic Location			
	East	West	Mid-West	South
	%	%	%	%
Yes	48	45	40	55
No	52	55	60	45
(Number of Respondents)	(217)	(202)	(243)	(314)
% of Total Sample	22	21	25	32
Gamma .07				

Impact of Attitudes Toward the Death Penalty on Belief That Prison Discourages Crime

Believe That Prison Discourages Crime	Attitude Toward The Death Penalty	
	Favor	Oppose
	%	%
Yes	51	42
No	49	58
(Number of Respondents)	(633)	(246)
% of Total Sample	72	28
Gamma .18		

Summary

Americans manifest generally positive attitudes toward the police. Overwhelming majorities say their local police are respectful and do not use too much force. Nearly two out of three people feel the police should be given more power to question people. Certain groups, however, are less trusting of the police. These include crime victims, younger adults, blacks, those who know crime victims, and those who see their neighborhoods as deteriorating.

However, given the high levels of fear of crime which pervade American life, it is not surprising that public attitudes toward the criminal justice system are cynical and attitudes toward the treatment of criminals themselves highly punitive. Eight out of ten Americans feel that the criminal justice system is not effective in rehabilitating criminals or in helping them return to society as law-abiding citizens. A vast majority of the public favors long prison sentences for convicted criminals, and two out of three Americans favor imposition of the death penalty.

Questionnaire

Questionnaire

Hello, my name is ______________________________. I am calling for Research & Forecasts. We are conducting a confidential survey about crime in America. Is there a person who is 18 years old or older who lives in your household?

1. How safe would you feel being out alone at night in your central business district or main shopping center?

   very safe
   somewhat safe
   somewhat unsafe
   very unsafe

2. How about during the day?

   very safe
   somewhat safe
   somewhat unsafe
   very unsafe

3. How often do you read articles about violent crime in the newspaper?

   almost every day
   several times a week
   about once a week
   several times a month
   rarely or never

4. How often do you see reports of violent crime on TV?

5. How often do you talk with friends and neighbors about violent crime?

6. How many hours did you watch TV last night between 6 P.M. and 11 P.M.?

   one hour
   two hours
   three hours
   four hours
   five hours
   less than one hour
   didn't watch TV at all

7. In the last week, how many days have you read your daily newspaper?

   one day
   two days
   three days
   four days
   five days
   six days
   seven days
   no days

8. How long have you lived in your neighborhood?

   under 1 year
   1-2 years
   3-5 years
   6-10 years
   over 10 years
   all my life

9. Has violent crime in your neighborhood in the past year:
    - increased
    - decreased
    - stayed about the same

10. Does your neighborhood have:
    - more violent crime than the average neighborhood
    - an average amount of violent crime
    - less than an average amount of violent crime
    - none

11. What percentage of the people who live in your neighborhood are quiet and law-abiding?
    - practically all of them
    - most of them
    - about half
    - less than half
    - none

12. In general, would you rate your local police department as:
    - excellent
    - good
    - only fair
    - poor

13. How safe would you feel being out alone at night in your neighborhood?
    - very safe
    - somewhat safe
    - somewhat unsafe
    - very unsafe

14. How about during the day?
    - very safe
    - somewhat safe
    - somewhat unsafe
    - very unsafe

15. Are there any neighborhood places where you used to go at night but are now afraid to go because of the threat of crime?
    - Yes
    - No

16. How safe would you feel alone at home during the day?
    - very safe
    - somewhat safe
    - somewhat unsafe
    - very unsafe

17. How about at night?
    - very safe
    - somewhat safe
    - somewhat unsafe
    - very unsafe

18. Is the neighborhood dangerous enough to make you think seriously about moving somewhere else?
    - Yes
    - No

Questionnaire

19. How often do you worry about the following things?
    - frequently
    - sometimes
    - rarely
    - never

    Getting murdered
    Getting sexually assaulted or raped
    Getting mugged
    Getting beaten up
    Getting knifed

20. How often do you worry your home will be burglarized when you're not there?
    - frequently
    - sometimes
    - rarely
    - never

21. In the last two years has this happened to you?
    - Yes
    - No

22. In the last two years has this happened to someone you know?
    - Yes
    - No

23. How often do you worry about being held up by an armed robber?
    - frequently
    - someties
    - rarely
    - never

24. In the past two years has this happened to you?
    - Yes
    - No

25. In the last two years has this happened to someone you know?
    - Yes
    - No

    (Categories for Questions 26-29)

    do nothing
    call the police
    personally try to stop the crime
    call the police and personally try to stop the crime

26. If your neighbors noticed you were being attacked, would they:

27. If you noticed that a neighbor was being attacked, would you:

28. If your neighbors noticed someone trying to break into your home, would they:

29. If you noticed someone trying to break into your neighbor's home, would you:

(Categories for Questions 30-33)

Do you agree or disagree with these statements?

agree
disagree

30. The local police department is fair in the way in which they enforce traffic laws.

31. The local police treat people of all races the same.

32. The local police just enjoy pushing people around and giving them a hard time.

33. The local police spend most of their time going after people who do little things wrong and ignore most of the bad things going on.

34. Which of the following best describes your local police officers?
    - respectful
    - arrogant

35. They are:
    - more honest than most people
    - about the same as most people
    - less honest than most people

36. Would you be in favor of your local government raising taxes in order to provide more police protection?
    - Yes
    - No

Last week how many nights did you:
(Categories for Questions 37-40)

none, never　　three times　　six times
once four times　　seven times
twice　　five times　don't know, refuse to answer

37. Go somewhere in your neighborhood for evening entertainment --to a show or somewhere like that?

38. Go shopping in your neighborhood in the evening?

39. Participate in neighborhood social or community activities in the evening?

40. Visit people socially in the evening?

Do you take any of these precautions?
(Categories for Questions 41-46)

most of the time
sometimes
never, almost never

41. When you go out after dark, how often do you get someone to go with you because of crime?

42. Do you plan your route to avoid potentially dangerous places?

43. Do you take something with you at night that could be used for protection -- like a dog, whistle, knife or gun?

44. When riding or sitting in a car do you keep the car doors locked to keep intruders out?

45. Do you dress plainly to avoid drawing attention?

46. Do you telephone back to a friend or relative to say you've arrived safe at home?

Do you protect your home by:
(Categories for Questions 47-54)

Yes
No

47. Engraving your valuables with some sort of identification?

48. Always keeping the doors locked when you go out?

49. Having extra locks on your doors?

50. Always identifying people before letting them in?

51. Having bars on some of your windows?

52. Having a burglar alarm?

53. Having a fire alarm?

54. Owning a gun?

Now think of the last time you went away for a weekend or more:

55. Did you stop delivery of newspapers or mail or have someone bring them in?

56. Did you have someone watch your home?

57. Did you set an automatic timer to switch on and off lights?

58. What is the main cause of violent crime in America today?
READ
1 = the need for money
2 = unemployment
3 = poverty (slums)
4 = leniency of courts (too easy on offenders, permissive laws)
5 = breakdown of traditional values (disregard of human life)
6 = the family (lack of parental supervision)
7 = TV (media coverage of crime)
8 = racial tensions
9 = don't know

Other (write in): ______________________________

____

59. How effective are most prisons in rehabilitating criminals and helping their return to society as law-abiding citizens?
    1 = very effective
    2 = effective
    3 = not particularly effective
    4 = totally ineffective

60. Is American today in:
    excellent shape
    good shape
    fair shape
    poor shape

61. Is the country:
    going downhill
    holding its own
    improving

62. What problem facing the federal government is most serious?
    inflation (the economy)
    energy (oil)
    foreign affairs (Iran, Russia, Afghanistan, defense)
    poverty
    unemployment (joblessness)
    crime
    education (school system)
    other (write in): ______________________

63. How effective is the federal government in solving this problem?

very effective	not very effective
effective	totally ineffective

Do you favor or oppose the following policies?
(Categories for Questions 64-72)

favor
oppose

64. The busing of black and white school children to achieve racial integration

65. A law requiring a person to obtain a police permit before buying a hand gun

66. Giving the police more power to question people

67. Wiretapping

68. Mandatory prison sentences for people convicted of violent crime

69. Probation for first offenders at the discretion of the court

70. Sterilization of habitual criminals and the hopelessly insane

71. Long prison sentences for people found guilty of violent crime

72. The death penalty for persons convicted of murder

(Categories for 73-77)

Yes
No

73. Does the death penalty discourage murder?

74. Do prison sentences discourage crime?

75. Are the courts in your area too harsh?

76. Do the police use too much force?

77. Is discrimination the main reason for the social problems faced by black people?

78. During most of your adult life is the main wage earner in your household:

salaried with a white collar job
a blue collar job
often lacking a steady job or unemployed
an owner of a business
a professional working for himself or herself
an executive in a big company
a farmer

79. Are you:
single
married
divorced
widowed
separated

80. Are you now:
employed full-time
employed part-time
retired
keeping house
looking for work

81. What is the last grade of school you completed?
8th grade or less
some high school
high school graduate
some college
college education
post graduate

82. What is your total household income category before taxes for the past year, 1979?
under $3,000
$3,000 to $7,000
$8,000 to $10,000
$11,000 to $15,000
$16,000 to $20,000
$21,000 to $25,000
$26,000 to $30,000
over $30,000

83. Is your ethnic group or racial background:
White
Black
Oriental
Hispanic
Mexican-American
Other (Specify) ____________________

Questionnaire

84. Do you live in a:
    - large city
    - small city
    - suburb
    - rural area

85. What is your age category?
    - 18 to 29
    - 30 to 39
    - 40 to 49
    - 50 to 59
    - 60 to 64
    - 65 to 69
    - 70 to 74
    - 75 or over

86. Interview is with:
    - Male
    - Female

Methodology

Methodology

After discussions with many experts in the field, a draft questionnaire was constructed, pretested and fielded.

The timetable for the various phases of this study was organized as follows:

1.	Literature Review and Re-analysis	October, November, 1979
2.	Questionnaire Construction Pretesting, and Final Questionnaire Refinement	December, 1979; January, February, March, 1980
3.	Fielding of Questionnaire	April, May 1-9, 1980
4.	Data Analysis and Report Writing	May 12 - August 30, 1980

Sample Selection

The sample used in this study was a national random digit sample of the telephones of the United States constructed for Research & Forecasts by Survey Sampling, Westport, Connecticut.

The method used to construct such samples involves the use of a massive data base which is updated frequently. Using the data base, a specialized computer program generates a list of telephone numbers that is organized in such a manner that each telephone has an equal probability of being called.

The use of the random digit dialing technique overcomes one of the main objectives to telephone surveys, the problem of unlisted numbers. Because the data base from which the sample is drawn is constructed from working exchanges supplied by the nation's telephone companies rather than telephone books, both listed and unlisted numbers have an equal probability of being called.

Another criticism of telephone surveys in the past has been that telephone surveys tend to oversample the affluent, because only they can afford telephones. However, U.S. National Health Service surveys in 1976 found that 91.6% of American households now contain telephones. Consequently, although national random telephone surveys may still somewhat undersample the poor, it is clear that any bias is relatively small.

Methodology

Data Collection

Twenty trained interviewers conducted phone interviews for a period of six weeks (April - May 9, 1980). The interviews were conducted during the week between the hours of 6:00 P.M. and 11:00 P.M., and on weekends between the hours of 10:30 A.M. and 10:30 P.M. The interview took approximately thirty-five minutes.

In order to assure random selection, three call-backs were made for those telephone numbers which resulted in non-response before the number was discarded. Final non-response was 12 percent of our phone calls and consisted of three groups: 1) those households where the phone was not answered, 2) those households where individuals simply refused to be interviewed, and 3) those households for whom the given time was not convenient. Although three call-backs were made for all three categories of non-response, the first two categories represent non-response problems which will persist regardless of interviewer persistence and the comprehensiveness of the sample size. Interviewers attempted to set convenient times to call back respondents in the third category to minimize the number of individuals in the third category.

In addition, 3 percent of our phone calls resulted in interviews which were terminated while the interview was in progress.

One thousand and forty-seven interviews were fully completed and usable. This represents a 85 percent overall response rate.

Sampling Distribution

Data collection techniques ensured that the randomness of the telephone number selection process was maintained. The random selection process ensures access to probability theory to measure the sampling error for our sample.

The normal approximation of the 95% confidence limits of the dichotomized percentage results of the sample may be computed as follows:

$$\text{Sample Confidence Limits} = p \pm \left[1.96 \sqrt{1 - \frac{n}{N}} \cdot \sqrt{\frac{p(N-1)}{(1-p)}} \frac{+1}{2n} \right]$$

Where p is the percentage result divided by 100, n is the sample size, and N is the total number of persons in the groups from which the probability sample is generated.

A table of the estimated sampling error for binomial percents at the 95% confidence level is reproduced below.

Estimated Sampling Error For A Binomial

(95% Confidence Level)

----Binomial Percentage Distribution----

Sample Size	50/50	60/40	70/30	80/20	90/10
100	10	9.8	9.2	8	6
200	7.1	6.9	6.5	5.7	4.2
300	5.8	5.7	5.3	4.6	3.5
400	5	4.9	4.6	4	3
500	4.5	4.4	4.1	3.6	2.7
600	4.1	4	3.7	3.3	2.4
700	3.8	3.7	3.5	3	2.3
800	3.5	3.5	3.2	2.8	2.1
900	3.3	3.3	3.1	2.7	2
1000	3.2	3.1	2.9	2.5	1.9

The sample size of 1,047 thus ensures that the statistics collected for the sample and the conclusions drawn from data analysis will be valid, within a 2% to 3% margin of error when extrapolated to the entire United States adult population of 155 million.

The geographic distribution of the respondents is as follows:

Geographic Distribution

East	23
Midwest	25
West	21
South	31

Weighting

The Initial sample did not exactly correspond to recent Census Bureau estimates of the demographic characteristics of the population over age 18.*

In order to make the two populations correspond more closely, we weighted our sampled population on two variables: gender and income.

The Census Bureau estimates the 1979 population over 18 as being 41.9% male and 58.1% female. In order to correct the sample findings to approximate the census figures, males in the sample were increased by a factor of 1.136 and females were decreased by a factor of .902.

Similarly, the income groups were weighted.** The group earning under $2,999 for 1978 (5.9% of the sample) was multiplied by a factor of 3.4. Those earning $3,000 to $7,999 per year (15.7% of the sample) were multiplied by a factor of 1.2. Those earning $8,000 to $11,000 (11.5% of the sample) were multiplied by a factor of 1. Those earning $11,000 to $15,999 per year (14.5% of the sample) were multiplied by a factor of .61. Those earning $16,000 to $21,000 (16.9% of the sample) were multiplied by a factor of .65. Those earning $21,000 or over (35.5% of the sample) were multiplied by a factor of 1.

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*U.S. Bureau of the Census - Statistical Abstract of the United States. p., 29

**ibid, p. 449

Data Analysis

All data, along with a numerical code for each person, were entered on 80-column punched cards. The cards were punched as data were collected and then entered onto a disc file of the Citishare Corporation Dec-20 computer. Descriptive statistics were collected throughout the data collection process to test for poor questions and bias in the sample. The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) data base system was used to store value and variable labels as well as data for each case.

Descriptive statistics were collected for the complete weighted sample. Analysis was carried out based on construction of two-way and three-way contingency tables, controlling for key variables. This enabled us to uncover relationships masked by the presence of a third variable.

Whenever possible, where data was of the interval or ratio level, or dichotomized, multivariate regression analysis, partial correlation analysis, and factor analysis procedures were undertaken to further explore the dynamic interaction between sets of variables.

All data were transcribed to magnetic tape. A clearly written code book was created with the tape and is available for additional analysis by other research groups.

Construction of Composite Measures

To ensure more valid measurement, composite variables were constructed to measure fear of crime and confidence in police. The use of composite measures is particularly useful for three reasons: 1) to minimize bias which may be found in responses to individual items; 2) to provide a broad range of variation with varying levels of intensity; and 3) to provide a valuable technique for data reduction.

Two major issues were addressed in selecting questions for each scale: (1) "Face Validity": The existence of a logically rational explanation of the interrelationship between questions, and

(2) Unidimensionality: Each item on the scale deals with the same conceptual dimension. The first step in the construction of the composite fear measure was to analyze the bivariate relationship between items under consideration for inclusion in the composite fear variable. Analysis of the matrix of correlation coefficients revealed two distinct clusters of items. These clusters were used to form two measures of fear of crime: the Formless Fear Scale and the Concrete Fear Scale.

A. Formless Fear Scale

The measure of formless fear is based upon the question: How safe would you feel? (under several circumstances):

- How safe would you feel being out alone at night in your central business district or main shopping center? (V8)
- How about during the day? (V9)
- How safe would you feel being out alone at night in your neighborhood? (V20)
- How about during the day? (V21)
- How safe would you feel alone at home during the day? (V23)
- How about at night? (V24)

The correlation coefficients among the items are listed below as well as the scale-item correlations. They are quite high and reveal the existence of a clear, unidimensional scale.

Formless Fear Index: individual item correlation coefficients

	V8	V9	V20	V21	V23	V24
V8		.92	.83	.80	.77	.69
V9			.74	.87	.76	.68
V20				.97	.79	.80
V21					.87	.71
V23						.98
V24						
Scale-item correlations:	.63	.74	.74	.81	.79	.72

These correlation coefficients indicate a very strong bivariate relationship among the items.

The high scale-item correlations indicate that the scale strongly predicts individual item responses for those items included in the index.

Formless Fear Guttman Scale Statistics:

Coefficient of reproducibility = 0.8938

Minimum marginal reproducibility = 0.7023

Coefficient of scalability = 0.6431

Methodology

B. Concrete Fear Scale:

The concrete fear scale was formed by responses to the following questions:

How often do you worry about the following things?

1 = frequently
2 = sometimes
3 = rarely
4 = never

- Getting murdered (V26)
- Getting sexually assaulted or raped (V27)
- Getting mugged (V28)
- Getting beaten up (V29)
- Getting knifed (V30)
- How often do you worry about being held up by an armed robber? (V39)

The inner cohesion among these items is quite high as shown by the matrix of correlation coefficients:

The correlation coefficients among the items are listed below as well as the scale-item correlations.

Concrete Fear Index: individual item correlation coefficients

	V26	V27	V28	V29	V30	V39
V26		.85	.84	.87	.88	.77
V27			.85	.85	.80	.60
V28				.97	.96	.77
V29					.98	.76
V30						.76
V39						
Scale-item correlations	.84	.75	.96	1.0	.98	.66

Concrete Fear Guttman Scale Statistics:

Coefficient of reproducibility = .85

Minimum marginal reproducibility = .56

Coefficient of scalability = .66

C. Confidence in the Local Police Index:

In order to formulate an overall measure of attitudes toward the local police, several items were combined. The questions included in the index were as follows:

° In general, would you rate your local police department as:

1 = excellent
2 = good
3 = fair
4 = poor

Do you agree or disagree with these statements?

1 = agree
2 = disagree

° The local police treat people of all races the same.

Response 1 was coded as 1 in calculating the composite confidence scale.

° The local police just enjoy pushing people around and giving them a hard time.

Response 2 was coded as 1 on the composite confidence scale.

- The local police spend most of their time going after people who do little things wrong and ignore most of the bad things going on.

  Response 2 was coded as 1 in calculating the composite confidence scale.

- Which of the following best describes your local police officers?

  - They are: 1 = respectful
    2 = arrogant

  Response 1 was coded as 1 in calculating the composite confidence scale.

- Do the police use too much force?

  1 = yes
  2 = no

Response 2 was coded as 1 in calculating the composite confidence scale.

As with the other composite scales, the overall score was the sum of the scores for each variable.

The range of values on the confidence scale was 0 to 6. The index was dichotomized: 0-2 = low confidence, 3-6 = high confidence.

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